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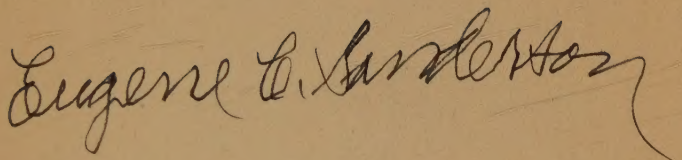

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VOLUME VI

The Rural Church

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BOOK I

THE RURAL CHURCH OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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I

SURVEY OF RURAL CIVILIZATION AND INSTITUTIONS

WARREN H. WILSON

Before attempting to state the prevailing conditions among rural churches and communities, it should be said that there are large areas in the United States in which rural churches thrive, and country people prosper. Broadly speaking, they are classified under the statement by an eastern professor of economics: "There are three classes of successful American farmers. In the order of their success they are, the Mormons, the Scotch Presbyterians, and the Pennsylvania Germans." These farmers have successful country churches. Their rural religious organizations have resisted the recent economic changes, which have so adversely affected other rural populations. And the organization of their communities is religious. Their churches are their social machinery for success in farming.

Another statement, by a western agricultural college president helps further to define the territory of successful rural life in America. "Only those peoples," said he, "who brought from Europe a form of culture of the land have maintained themselves in the east against the competition of the western lands." He added

that he referred to the Pennsylvania Germans, German Lutherans, Danes, Polish and rural Catholics, and other similar successful tillers of the soil. All of these have strong and tenacious country churches, able longer than American congregations do, to resist the social and economic forces which are dissolving American country communities, and closing a surprising proportion of country churches.

The most of the country churches, however, do not belong under these classes: and our concern is with the most of the churches, because theirs are the prevailing conditions. They also are the American churches: their state a result of causes that characterize the American way of living. The successful do not help the unsuccessful. Averages count for nothing in such a survey. We have to deal with typical states, with representative experiences. This chapter and this book have concern with the American rural church, rooted in American farming, the most illuminating institution for him to study who would know American country life.

Profitless living is the first trouble in American rural civilization. There is a lack of adequate income, in the first place. Near Ithaca, New York, farmers prosper as they do in few parts of the State; but by a survey made by the College of Agriculture it was found that among 615 farmers the average labor income was only $423. That is, after paying interest on their invested capital, and accounting for work done by others,

the farmer is able to pay himself a wage of only about $1.20 per day.

There is little room here for the satisfactory farming described by Dean Bailey, who asks for the farmer a good income; an income good enough to support a family; good enough to give something to the community; good enough to enable the farmer to keep up the land in as fertile and as productive condition as it was when he got it.

Meantime the prices of farm land are going up, while the values of the same land are going down. The land will produce less, but it will sell for more. This is a very bad condition for rural civilization, for it is deceptive. The farmer has a bigger capital, but gets a smaller interest on it. He is ever tempted to sell, and many farmers, under this rise of price of lands, are moving from place to place. The old homestead, once sacred, is regarded not as a home but as a property. Moral and religious institutions cannot be so listed among one's ticketed assets: and they are not valued at all.

The superficial prosperity which results shows its weaknesses in retarded schools and churches, alongside of farms well-stocked and improved. For the farmer can afford to borrow money against his increased capital, for improvements. He cannot be expected to give to the church out of borrowed money. And he will not pay borrowed money for the improvement of schools or the betterment of the roads.

The expenditures of any community for civilization must always come out of its profits. It would be a false benevolence to pay them by increasing mortgages. To have better churches, schools and homes the American farmer must have a better income for his labor.

All through Indiana and Illinois are farmers, representative men, who are working hard to secure four and five per cent interest on their investment. I met one of these men who had sold out and gone to Arkansas and there was making one hundred per cent interest on the money on which in Indiana, with harder labor, he could only get three per cent. Of course, out of such men no preacher, of however great eloquence, could create a lasting and permanent church.

Another farmer in Illinois when his farm was worth $75 per acre was raising on it ninety bushels of corn per acre; but when it had gone to $175 per acre was able only to raise, with more work and better machinery, forty-eight bushels of corn per acre. Such farmers live with an eye to the speculative sale of their lands. They are not building homes, or improving schools, or interested in better churches. They cannot farm well enough for sustaining these centers of rural civilization.

We are in the midst of a period of farm speculation, in which the agents are farmers themselves. Inflated prices prevail; for while there has been an increase in the prices paid for farm

produce the farmer's net income has gone up but little, and his invested capital has increased much. Nowadays the farmer is a consumer, as well as a producer. He lives not on his products but on his profits. When prices of cotton and wool and meat and grain go up, his income is thereby taxed, just as the income of a city man is, because he too has to buy all these in manufactured forms. There is therefore no justification for the increased prices of farm land in an increased net profit for the farmer. Such speculative prices as now prevail tend only to disturb the farmers of a community, to undermine the stability of families, and to break up the support of churches.

This speculation means a change of ownership, and a rearrangement of the population of the farming communities. "The farms are passing into the hands of those who will till them to the best advantage," says Professor Carver. And on the same reasoning, Mr. Jared van Wagenen, a New York farmer, says, "The country church must concern itself with seeds and silos, because ultimately the land and the wealth in the country will pass into the hands of the best farmers. Therefore the Church must see to it that her people are good farmers." This was the logic of the Country Life Commission, which grounded the whole rural question upon betterment of economic conditions.

A sort of social exploitation of the open country by the towns, villages and small cities, adds

to the speculative exploitation of the lands. It is a long step from living on a farm to living in town. A working farmer differs most of all from a retired farmer. The retired farmer wants to be citified, and his wife hopes to be cultured. The working farmer dignifies life with ownership of land, and despises the man who knowing only how to farm lives idle in a town house. Villages and small cities all over the country which have their incomes from farming, look for their ideas to the big cities, and find no charm in the open country.

Until very recently this took the form of neglecting to live off the surrounding country and buying farm produce, butter and eggs, from the big cities, through endless middlemen; but in the past two years in many small cities markets have been established, where the farmers can stand their wagons and sell direct to the consumers of the town. In those towns, walled off from the open country by a social rampart, the churches have had as a rule no country worshippers, and no farmers are on their official boards. Sir Horace Plunkett first pointed this out, and showed the connection between economic alienation and religious cleavage. Churches are exceedingly sensitive to social feeling, and the farmer who lives within a mile of a church in "not a good farmers' town" will go three miles to church in the country rather than one mile to the church in which he is an alien. Yet that church is usually supported by money that smells

of fertilizer, and its members lay it on the plate with hands that are still callous from handling the reins. It takes a special revolution for a church in such a town to become serviceable to the people of the surrounding country. The best way to make that revolution easy is for the retired farmers of the town to secure the establishment of a town market, where producers of the country can meet the consumers of the town.

Good examples of the overcoming of this alienation of town and country are the work of Dr. Persons in Cazenovia, New York, and of Mr. Adams in Bement, Ill. Both these men have made their churches cathedrals of country people. When the latter was about to extend his work to the farmers out of the center, he was told by an older man, "That bell on your church can be heard ten miles; if the farmers want to come they always know when the church is open!" But now the sound of "that bell" has a definite meaning to the people for ten miles round. It is the call of "our church" to worship. Mr. Adams keeps a saddle horse, and has a woman assistant who also lives in the saddle, to supplement his work. Most town ministers have little religious use for horse or automobile.

Resulting from this organized exploitation of the open country and occasioned by the poverty of social life among people who have so little to spend on their social machinery, there is a great tendency for owners to live in town and to work the land through tenants. It is often easier to

secure a tenant than to hire a hand. Sometimes the tenant, or "renter," makes more than does the owner. Our concern with him here is in the fact that, irrespective of his personal character, he is a bad man for rural society. This is because he has only a one-year lease on the land. He cannot improve the soil because another man may have it next year. He cannot support a church because he has no anchorage in the place. He is sometimes instructed to oppose the improvement of schools because the landlord feels that he cannot afford to pay more taxes. We found in Illinois tenants who were instructed by the owners that the improvement of schools would lead to increase of the rent.

These families of renters, and those families who have not enough land to get a living from it, are the people on whom the country church has least hold. They most of all need its ministration, and they attend the least of any, they have the smallest place in the membership. Yet over the whole country four families out of ten are renters. This proportion is increasing. It is already greatest on the best lands, and on the best lands the percentage of tenantry is increasing with the greatest rapidity.

In spite of the fact that we have no peasantry in America, there is a growing distinction of classes among country people, which shows itself in religious conditions. Churches are exceedingly sensitive to social change. It was found in the Pennsylvania Survey that in the communities

where there is only one social class 62 per cent of the churches are growing, 19 per cent stationary and 19 per cent losing. In the communities in which there are two social classes this condition was changed; only 34 per cent were growing, 34 per cent were stationary and 32 per cent losing ground. But in the communities in which this class distinction had gone further, and three or more classes had appeared, two-thirds of the churches were doing well: that is, 68 per cent were growing, 17 per cent stationary and 15 per cent were losing. This condition, which applied to all the churches, of all denominations, exhibits a cause of much religious confusion. It at the same time points the way to the remedy, and it justifies a counsel of hope to those who are going through the process. The lot of a minister in a country community of two classes is a hard one.

There are too many churches in the country, especially in the villages. This is a well known condition. It results from a number of causes. The tendency to class distinction is one. Another is the increase in the number of renters in a community. The minister of a badly overchurched Pennsylvania town says the chief cause has been the arrogant hatred of the "Pennsylvania Dutch" by the Scotch-Irish. Another cause is dogmatical zeal, especially on the part of ministers. Sad to relate, one of the greatest causes of all is just plain meanness of spirit, and the desire to rule.

It must always be remembered that there are fewer people in the country than there were before farm machinery banished two hands out of three to the cities. Nowadays most of the work of farming is done in factories, where cunningly devised machines are made which under the care of a man who can "drive team" will do the work of several men. So that there is not a living in the country for all the people who have a hand in tilling soil.

These and other causes have closed many country churches. It is estimated, on a basis of surveys in thirteen counties in Illinois, that in that State alone 1700 country churches have been closed in the past twenty years; and they are abandoned forever as churches. Similarly 550 were found abandoned in Missouri.

Yet more churches are being formed every decade. The new Census disclosed many new denominations, born in the past decade, in which men have been deploring the decay of faith. It is a cheering, and yet a baffling spectacle. Federation of religious forces is the aspiration of us all, yet we breed a spawn of new "sects and bisects" overnight! Denominations are even conceived with the professed aim of uniting Christendom, and baptized in the name of unity, and preached as a means of uniting Christians by further division of the number! Truly "mankind is incurably religious!" But there are many who agree with Benjamin Kidd in holding that religion transcends reason, notwithstand-

ing the fact that they have never read his book.

The mind of rural folk is independent, self-reliant and unwilling to cooperate. Farmers will not obey farmers! They will not generally co-operate in getting a living, they decline to centralize the schools, and their churches, which need it most, have the least tendency to federate. This uncooperative state of mind is due to lonely work and solitary living. Long hours pass when the farmer sees no one and thinks within his own interests alone. He becomes suspicious as well as self-contained, wary of his neighbor as well as jealous of the great combinations of industry. He is at once afraid of the "money trust" and opposed to the leadership of a neighbor for any common interest.

This results in a flat and level equality in the country. Men decline to be led, and the natural leader is terrified at the name, hastening to deny that he or any one else leads his neighbors. In 53 communities in Pennsylvania only one was found in which a farmer was leader of his fellows; and in 22 of these communities no one was acknowledged as a leader. In the others a minister, a merchant or a politician, but never a farmer, was the leader.

This independence of mind takes the form of austerity, which forbids play. Most rural communities have inadequate social life. Young folks are restless there. Farm hands prefer the towns and cities, with their warmer sympathy for the play spirit. Villages and towns, near to the

open country, usually furnish an over-supply of paid recreation, of a poor sort, because there is so little play among the rural people. The young men and women come to these places, the farm hands too, and engage in amusements, offered them for pay, that are lower than they would have at home. And the village is defiled with playhouses which would not be created for any people who live at home.

The whole problem of recreation needs to be worked out in the country under religious and school auspices. It is closely related to moral problems, not only because some go wrong through the form of amusements which they find, but because the playground is the field in which to train men, especially the young, in the needed virtues of honor, truthfulness, courage, and all the experiences of team-play. Obedience is the lesson farmers need to learn most of all, and it is a flower that blooms best in the mind of the child that has played much with other children at organized games.

The recreations which do flourish in the country are mostly innocent, showing that the rural moralist has more cause to praise than to blame the young.

Two things are greatly needed in country places. The first is in every community a place and a habit of leisurely meeting. Country people meet now in commercial and indifferent places. The whole tone of life in the country is tinged with the color of the country store.

It smells of raisins and salt mackerel. It should have the savor of good converse in an uplifting place, and should be clothed with the remembrance of good music. Every country church, especially if placed in a village, should open some room for the farmers, on the day on which they "do their trading" and generally in the evenings, and should offer some periodic entertainment, often of an elevating, and always of a refreshing sort, in order that the leisurely associations of country people may leaven the whole community with a spirit above that of the country store. At present the church is content to attempt on one Sunday of the month, for two hours, to eradicate the spirit which the store has implanted every day of the month, except Sunday. It is the spirit of horse trading, of small politics, of neighborhood gossip and of the changes of the weather.

The last and greatest need of the country is a resident pastorate. Most of the ministers who preach there do not live there. And they do not generally preach where they live. They are absentees, like the landlords. The preach about a Holy Land of old and a heavenly city that is to be. We need pastors. Preaching is easy, and it is most pleasing often when it is most false and foreign. The gospel for the country must be vital, modern, attentive to life as it is. The man who preaches it ought to be able to live on the soil and know the people who till it so well as to teach them that "the soil is holy."

II

DESCRIPTION OF AN IDEAL RURAL CIVILIZATION

HENRY WALLACE

Humanity never rises above its ideals. The most magnificent temple ever erected first existed in the mind of the architect, and fell below his ideal. What ought to be is always above and beyond what is. Unless, however, we have before us the vision of something better, we can never rise above what we are.

So long as we think of the farm as merely a place to live, either cheap or cheaply, or as merely a place to make money, we shall never evolve a rural civilization worth while. So long as we think of the farm as a farm and not as a home, our home life will always be defective. So long as we think of country life as competitive instead of cooperative, we shall never have an ideal rural civilization. So long as our children are taught in the rural schools in terms of the city, by teachers who in their secret thoughts regard the life of the city as the only life worth living, these children when grown will prefer the city. So long as our religion is taught in abstract terms which the people who need most the blessings of the

gospel do not understand, without illustrations from rural life, and by preachers whose ambition is to fill or at least occupy a city pulpit, the vacant pews in the rural church will be in the majority.

A rural civilization that will hold men to the soil must be satisfactory materially, intellectually, socially and spiritually, to the boys and girls born and bred on the soil. If agriculture is to be the basis of a rural civilization, it must furnish a comfortable living to the man who tills the soil; not necessarily great wealth, but by no means poverty. It must approximately realize the ideal of Agur the son of Jakeh, whose prayer was thought worthy of incorporation in the Proverbs of Solomon:

"Give me neither poverty nor riches;
Feed me with the food that is needful for me:
Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is
Jehovah?
Or lest I be poor, and steal,
And use profanely the name of my God."

For the problems of agriculture are at bottom economic problems. There is no virtue in poverty either in the city or the country, though some make a virtue of it. There may be, and there are here and there, manly virtues and womanly graces in poverty-stricken homes; but there can be no high civilization where the tillers of the soil are peasants, with children doomed

to peasantry, who have masters or over-lords to do their thinking for them. "The man with the hoe," his senses dulled by continuous toil, incapable of appreciating the beauties of earth or sky, the song of birds by day or the voices of the night, the majesty of the storm or the soothing, quieting influence of the calm, can never be the basis of a stable and permanent democracy, as the farmer must ever be, the bed-rock on which our institutions, both civil and religious, must ever rest. A rural civilization worth having must fundamentally rest on a sound economic basis.

The man who tills the soil must have his reward, not a living merely, but a living that will fit him and his for the duties of citizenship, a living worth fighting for in the field of politics in times of peace, and when his country calls him to its defense, in times of war. For as a Chinese philosopher said ages and ages ago: "The well-being of the people is like a tree: agriculture is its root; manufactures and commerce are its branches and its life. If the root is injured the leaves fall, the branches fall away and the tree dies." About all that the modern apostles of country life have done or will ever do is to expound and illustrate this saying of the ancient oriental sage. No civilization can long endure in a country like ours, unless it is based on an agriculture which is economically profitable.

An ideal rural civilization must furnish ample scope for the ever-expanding intellect of the till-

ers of the soil. In the degenerate days when the apocryphal books were written the son of Sirach, who had great esteem for his wisdom and the wisdom of his father and his grandfather, recorded the opinion of the general public concerning the farmer in these words:

"How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plow, and that glorieth in the goad; that driveth oxen and is occupied with their labors; and whose talk is of oxen; who giveth his hand to make furrows, and his diligence to give the kine fodder? . . . He shall not be sought for in public council, nor sit high in the congregation. He shall not sit in the judges' seat, nor understand the sentence of judgment. He can not declare justice and judgment, and shall not be found where parables are spoken, but will maintain the state of the world."

Compare this with the saying of the prophet Isaiah in the degenerate days of Ahaz, when after describing the methods of the farmers of that day he writes:

"For his God doth instruct him aright, and doth teach him. . . . This also cometh forth from Jehovah of hosts, who is wonderful in council and excellent 'n wisdom."

With our men of wealth pouring out with lavish hand their millions for the endowment of the higher institutions of learning, with the churches endowing the smaller colleges, with the states spending in some cases two-fifths of their taxes for the education which the common

schools give, with the government endowing universities and agricultural colleges, and both state and national governments expending millions annually for agricultural education, for experimentation and extension work; there can be no rural civilization worthy of the name or really worth having, that does not quicken and stimulate the intellect of the boys and girls reared in the open country.

We are unspeakably foolish to expect a boy or girl reared in the open country to remain there, if we continue to send them, at the age when the mind is most plastic, to a one-room school, wind-swept and sun-baked, with a handful of pupils of varying ages (hence a playless school), taught by a town-bred miss, who teaches only while awaiting an attractive proposal of marriage, or (that failing), a position in a town school, whose soul revolts at country manners and customs, and who regards the life of the town or city as the only satisfying life.

If we are ever to have an ideal rural civilization, it must be soil-born. It must be an expressing of the best feelings, ambitions and desires of the child of the fields, whose vision is bounded only by the wide horizon by day and the starry heavens by night, and not of the child of the house, whose vision is that of the streets by day and electric lights by night. The countryman, whose plan for his day's work may have to be entirely changed when he scans the sky in the morning, and who must perforce be an

all-round man, doing many things well, but a specialist in none, is a different sort of man altogether from the city man, with whom the weather is a mere incident and who is, speaking generally, a mere pivot or crank, or perhaps a wheel in a great machine, who does but one thing and that automatically, almost without conscious thought.

If this child of the fields, living close to nature, or rather, nature's God, does not have the fullest opportunity to develop his intellectual powers; if he is not so trained that he can see the working of law in the movement of water in the soil, in the opening bud, in the growing grass, in the sugaring-off of corn when the extreme heat of the season is passing, in the gathering storm and in the lightning flash, then there can be no rural civilization worthy of the name.

If he is not taught to regard the earth on which he treads, from which he gets his own living and feeds all others, as holy ground, teeming with life; in which the microbe is supernatural to the germless clod, the plant supernatural to the microbe, the animal supernatural to the plant, and himself to the animal, as to him God is supernatural, there can be no rural civilization in a true sense. (Neither can there be in the end any abiding civilization in the city. The cities come to the country for horses, which they wear out in a few years. In like manner they must ever draw on the same country for men and for families, to be worn out in from one to three

generations.) This teaching can be done effectually only in the terms of farm life and in the spirit of the farm. This and this alone will open up to the inquiring mind of the country-born a whole wonderland of knowledge; and so in time a rural civilization providing for both the material and the intellectual well-being.

An ideal rural community must provide a satisfactory social life for the coming generations. We in these days, even in the oldest sections, are at best but pioneers; and whether we will or not, are laying the foundations for a civilization of some sort, building a temple for the habitation of the unborn. It is a matter of world-wide concern and tremendous import, whether we build with wood, hay, stubble, or with the most precious and enduring things of which the mind of man can conceive. Long before the final Judgment Day, the fire will test the permanency and value of our work.

That civilization must provide for the social wants of the coming generation; for the greatest thing in this life after all is mankind, and the best part of humanity is the boy and girl filled with the joy of living, whose ideals are as yet undimmed. Better, much better, than even the wine of which Solomon spoke, "that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak," is the joy of social intercourse to the young people. Society they must and will have, and by the decree of God thrilling in every nerve and fiber of their being ought to have. It

is for us to say whether that same social life shall elevate their lives and keep them pure, or debase them; whether that age-long and divinely decreed attraction of the man and the maiden for each other shall result in a noble manhood and pure womanhood, or whether it shall mar and debase the image of God stamped on every little child born into the world.

The future civilization of America depends largely on whether we are to have a playless country school, or schools large enough for games for pupils of each sex; whether the sports of the countryside are to be country sports, real sports without the pollution of the dollar mark, training the young people for cooperative and team work, self-control and confidence in themselves; or whether they are forced to the towns and cities for the recreation and amusement which their natures demand. If we are ever to have a civilization distinctly rural (we are far from that now), the open country must provide its own society, its own sports—sports that are born of the soil and conducted as pure sport for sport's sake, not professional, nor dollar-stained.

The same is true of society. Man is essentially a social being, gregarious, as absolutely dependent on his fellow man for the supplying of his intellectual and spiritual wants as for the supply of his material wants. The countryman does not fit into the social life of the city or even of the country town. The townsman regards the retired farmer, no matter how wealthy he may

be, as desirable only to the extent of his wants to be supplied from the store, but otherwise an encumbrance, a brake on the wheels of progress.

Whether in the town or the country, if there is to be society, there must be a social center; and whether that social center is a saloon, a dance-hall, a club or a church, determines the character of the man and woman who attends. A rural civilization must have a rural social center; and whether that will be the centralized school, a church, the Grange or a club, is something that time and local circumstances alone must determine. But a social center there must be, if a life worth living is to be found in the open country.

It need scarcely be said that an ideal rural civilization will provide for the expression of the religious convictions, emotions and spiritual life of the country people. A civilization without religion falls short even of barbarism. The main distinction between man and other animals is that he is capable of a religious experience, while they are not. "There is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding." That is, man alone of all animals is capable of fellowship with the Divine.

Of all men the farmer is naturally the most religious. He is more than any other class in close contact with the great forces of nature, which express and reveal "His everlasting power and divinity." He is awed by the majesty of the summer storm, the pitiless power of the winter

blizzard; and soothed by the balmy breezes of spring. The flower opens out its petals before his eyes as it welcomes and encloses the dew-drop. The ancestral traits revealed in the young things as they come to the farm teach him of the inheritance of evil as well as of good. The wild life on his farm and that which flies over it reveal to him those implanted instincts that show God's method of caring for the sparrow. His very occupation develops in him the sterling qualities of industry, temperance, economy, frugality, without which professed religion is a vain thing. His success in his business is measured by his actual obedience to the laws of God in nature in connection with his actual obedience to the moral law.

Of all classes the farming class is undoubtedly the most susceptible to religious impressions; and yet from 50 to 60 per cent of the country people on the prairies and in the uplands the nation over have no church connection, and send for the preacher only for the solemnization of marriages and the burial of the dead. Never was there a finer field for missionary effort. Seldom has there been one so poorly occupied; and why?

Partly because country churches are still actively competitive, and are building fences for protection against each other with material never quarried out of the rock of Zion. Partly because the eternal verities of our religion are expressed in terms of a theology that has outlived

its usefulness. Partly because ministers fail to follow the example of the Master, who taught the fundamental truths of religion in terms of the daily and for the most part country life of His hearers. Partly because the religion thus taught is applied to only a fraction of the farmer's life. The religion that will touch the farmer's heart, and shape and mold must not appeal to his emotions alone, although emotion has its place; nor to reason alone, although that has a large place. It must take in his whole life—the plowing and sowing and cultivating and reaping; his home life; the ethics of his business; his political life; the education of his children, and their sports and plays as well.

The fatherhood of God revealed in the Man who was declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead; a life begun here, continuing in the life to come by those who have a living faith in the Risen One; the brotherhood of man expressed by brotherly deeds; the duty of the farmer to help in every way possible his struggling brother farmers—these are the great fundamental truths that appeal to God's hired man, or rather helper, through whom and by whom he feeds and clothes the world. The farmer will sit at the feet of the sincere man, who knows the heart and life of the farmer, and who interprets to him the will of God in terms of farm life. For the support of a gospel of this sort the farmer's pocketbook will always open willingly.

This is my concept of the gospel of the new and coming rural civilization. It is coming, certainly coming, though perhaps yet a long ways off, and yet perhaps nearer than we think. Until it does come our civilization, such as we have even in the city, is not on an enduring basis. Until it comes we shall continue to send to the city young men trained by their intense individualism and insufficient moral teaching to a purely selfish competition, to develop in the fierce competition and strife of the city the full fruits of the gospel according to Beelzebub: "Every fellow for himself," the said Beelzebub controlling not merely the hindmost but the foremost as well. For the vices of the city, at least the more respectable vices, are simply the fuller development of the vices of the country.

The country church does not flourish, partly because of failure to preach the gospel as above outlined, and partly because forces operating at least through the entire Anglo-Saxon race are driving the farmer from the open country to the city—forces which he did not create, but which are sterilizing both the country church and the country school by driving the farmer from his farm. No such phenomenon as the drift of farmers by the thousands to the town to rot like "a fat weed on . . . Lethe wharf," or the pouring of country schools into city schools, or the drifting of tens of thousands of their sons and daughters to the city (whence they can not return because unfitted by city life for the life

of the farm), would have been possible without some great underlying causes, which it is not in my province at this time to describe.

The consumer whether in the city or the country complains of the ever-increasing cost of living; the farmer of the ever-increasing cost of production and distribution. The food supply of this country can be doubled, but it can not be even materially increased until there are more skilled laborers on the farms. This skill can be acquired only on the farm, and can be retained on the farm only by making life in the country satisfactory to those born on the farm. This can not be done without a material, intellectual, social and religious life in the open country, that will meet the wants of the country people young and old. A readjustment is inevitable, and there will be some severe jolts while it is being made; but the only way it can be made is by the development of a rural civilization that will be satisfying to those who in the future must feed and clothe the world.

III

THE MEANS AT HAND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IDEAL RURAL CIVILIZATION

H. J. Waters

"The great rural interests are human interests, and good crops are of little value to the farmer unless they open the door to a good kind of life on the farm."

Keep on the farm a fair proportion of the best people produced there, and develop them to their highest state of efficiency by education and organization, and an ideal civilization is attained. Reduced to its simplest terms it is a problem of an intelligent man provided with a reasonable opportunity.

How so to organize the rural forces that the husbandman may derive a reasonable profit from his investment and labor at the same time that he sells his products—the world's food—at a price which the consumer can afford to pay, is our most fundamental problem. Thus, the man in the city is as much concerned in the character of our rural civilization as is the man on the farm, for it is here that he must look for his food, and it is here that the city must look for much of its best blood.

Heretofore most of the best stock that the country produced has been lost to the country. One of the things for which the last quarter of a century will be especially distinguished when history is written, is the great tide of population which has flowed from the country to the city. In the same period that our rural population doubled, our city population increased tenfold. Within the last decade most of our great agricultural states have lost in numbers, people living on the farm. The number of individual farms has decreased, while the size of the average farm has increased.

David Starr Jordan,* President of Leland Stanford University, has pointed out with great clearness how nations decay through the survival of the unfit; that is, when the best specimens of manhood, the most fit physically, mentally and morally, are killed in war, and the weaker and least fit are left behind to become the parents of the next generation. There is not a stockman or farmer who would expect to maintain even the present standards of his herds and crops, much less to improve them, if he sold off the best he produced and kept as parents or seed the poorest. Exactly the same principle applies to people. If we are to maintain our present standard of manhood and womanhood in the country, it will be necessary to retain as parents of the succeeding generations a fair

* "The Blood of the Nation," Boston, 1906.

proportion of the best that the country produces.

It is hopeless to expect, and it is not necessary, in order to maintain present standards, to retain all of the best, but to lose most of the best will inevitably produce an inferior race.

It is estimated that 85 per cent of those who have achieved sufficient distinction to have their name recorded in the current number of "Who's Who in America," have been born and reared on the farm or in the rural village. Of especial significance in this connection is the fact that these people did not find their opportunity in the rural community. The city provided the opportunity, and has derived the direct benefit from their achievements.

In order to retain a fair share of the best stock in the country, it will be necessary to do two things. First: to equalize the opportunities in the country and city. To make chances for success—conspicuous success—as large in one place as in the other. Second: we must cease to employ our schools, churches and literature, and the conversation at the family fire side, to accentuate this drift from the country to the city.

The difference between city and country life in respect to business opportunities, social advantages, etc., has been greatly exaggerated in the public mind. The young people of the country have been taught in their homes, schools, and through the literature placed in their hands,

largely to overestimate the advantages of city life, and they have not been taught correctly to comprehend its disadvantages. Likewise, the people of both the city and the country exaggerate the difficulties and drudgeries of country life, and fail fully to appreciate its great and peculiar advantages. This trend cityward, therefore, partly is due to the half education that has prevailed in the rural districts, giving farm boys and girls glimpses of more attractive city life than really exists, without teaching them at the same time the attractiveness of country life, and how they may attain their ideals of living in the country.

Equalizing the Business and Social Advantages in the Country and Town

It goes without saying that we should seek to accomplish this by increasing the opportunities of the country, rather than by restricting those of the city. This involves the whole range of successful farming, of insuring to the farmer a fair share of what the consumer pays for his produce, the coining of this income into the right sort of family life, and its utilization in building and maintaining a high civilization.

Maintaining a High Man-Yield

During the last quarter of a century our total food output was doubled, but the yield per acre remained stationary. Our population is increasing at the rate of over one million per year, which

means that within the next two generations, we again shall need to double our food production. This second doubling cannot come as did the first, by doubling the area under the plow. We have reached in a large way the end of the expansion of our tillable area and henceforth we must look to the acres now in cultivation to produce the food we consume. At first thought the doubling of our acre-yields seems like an appalling task, and it may be doubted if the farmer of tomorrow will be able to meet this demand of society. The outcome in this respect, however, need not give us serious concern. It is no longer an unsolved problem. Other nations have doubled their acre-yields and when it is necessary, we will double ours. It is true it took Great Britain a full century to do it, but with the experience of European countries as a guide, it will be possible for the American farmer to accomplish this feat in less than a single generation.

Intimately connected with this, however, is a problem of far more fundamental significance than the doubling of acre-yields, a problem which the world has not yet solved, namely, the keeping of the man-yield up while doubling the acre-yield. The increased acre-yield in America must not come at the expense of the man-yield. We must not offer the manhood and womanhood of the American farmer as a sacrifice upon the altar of high acre-yields, as has been done in European countries. To illustrate; the aver-

age yield of wheat in America is less than 15 bushels per acre, in Germany about 31, and in France about 30. The yield per farm family is,

In America	$900
In Germany	$580
In France	$570

The intelligence of the people on the farm in any country finally is directly related to the income derived from the business as compared with the income from other occupations. People will stay on the farm if the opportunities are as good in agriculture as in other lines, the intelligent and ambitious will leave the farm if they are not. Reduce the income of the farm family in America to that of Continental Europe, and a peasant class in America will be the inevitable result. That is to say, the American farm must yield profit enough so that the people of superior blood will be content to remain on the land. If farming is allowed to become unprofitable as compared with the other occupations, it will be given over to a less efficient race than is now on the farm. Great Britain is already feeling the effect of the operation of this law. There are a million and one half fewer acres under cultivation there now than there were ten years ago. A Government Commission, after carefully investigating the situation offers as a cause the impossibility of land ownership on account of the high price of land and the relatively low returns which have led to slack methods of

farming and rendered the business wholly unprofitable except on the best land.

The Hundred Per Cent Farmer

In the effort to equalize the country and city opportunities, the farmer must do his part. He must farm to the full capacity of his soil and season.

Will a better education than he now has make him more effective? Will the soil under the management of a high school or college trained farmer yield its harvest more abundantly and more certainly?

Cornell University recently took the record of 573 farmers in New York State, representing all the farmers in a typical agricultural district, and classified their earnings per adult laborer, according to the education of the farmer, with the following results:

	Number of farmers	Average labor income	Endowment
Attended district school only	398	$318	
Attended high school or equivalent	168	622	$ 6,000
Attended college	10	847	10,500

Thus a high school trained farmer was nearly twice as effective as a district school trained farmer. A high school course was, according to their results, more than the equivalent of a $6,000 endowment.

When a non-technical high school course

nearly doubled the efficiency of a farmer, as compared with an eighth grade course, what may be expected of a man trained in a properly equipped agricultural high school? Or when a part of a college course will make a farmer two and three-fourths times as effective as a district school trained man, what may we expect of a graduate of an agricultural college?

What Vocational Education Has Done For Denmark

Among the countries of Europe, Denmark has been notably successful in meeting these problems with her technical schools, and we may derive much profit by considering the results. This little country, with an area of a little more than 15,000 square miles and with a population of about two and a quarter million, makes school attendance compulsory up to the age of fourteen years. In these schools the children are taught bookkeeping, business methods, and everything possible pertaining to the industries and to farm life, all in addition to the ordinary school subjects. Above this, are the sixty agricultural high schools and the courses in the agricultural colleges. That little country supports twenty-nine agricultural colleges with an attendance of more than six thousand students. In America we are satisfied if a state, substantially aided by the nation, supports one agricultural college.

The United States with favorable soil and climate supports a population of twenty-eight peo-

ple to the square mile and is struggling to keep its trade balance in food stuffs on the right side of the ledger.

Denmark, with a poor soil and a harsh climate, supports a population of 155 people to the square mile, and exports nine dollars worth of food stuff for every acre under cultivation.

The United States, so recently settled and yet so undeveloped, has not more than thirty-five per cent of her population on the farm, while Denmark, old as she is, has approximately sixty-five per cent of her people on the farm. In this country, with Uncle Sam still giving away farms, four out of every ten farmers are tenants, carrying with them all the baneful influences which a tenant system exerts upon the country roads, the country schools and the country church. In Denmark nine out of every ten farmers own the soil they till.

The Rural School

The boys and girls in the rural schools today are to be the farmers and farmers' wives of tomorrow. It is they who will have to double our acre-yield if the world is not to go hungry, and to do what has not been done, maintain a high man-yield. Nine-tenths of these children will not enter a high school unless it is brought to them.

The rural schools need to be consolidated and a first class high school should be put within easy riding distance of every boy and girl in America.

In these schools the boys must be taught economics and government; how to judge stock; how soil is wasted; how to market the products of their labor. The girl should be trained to take her place at the head of a home, which means that she should have a knowledge of human nutrition, personal hygiene, home decoration, sewing and cooking.

This is the first time in history that the remedy for recurrent poverty and suffering among both the producing and the consuming classes has been sought in a more extended and a more practical education. We must be certain not to further emphasize the difference between the city and the country by giving the children of one class superior advantages and neglecting the others.

Types of Farming

We hear much about establishing intensive systems of farming. Cases are brought forth by way of illustrating the possibilities in this direction wherein returns of from $100 to $500 per acre are obtained from fruit, market vegetables or some other special crop. It should be remembered, however, that less than 5 per cent of our total rural area is devoted to crops that lend themselves to such intensive methods. Double the area in such crops and the demand of the market would be over supplied and still we would have ninety per cent of the agricultural area to be grown in the staple crops, such as corn, wheat, cotton, hay, etc.; or devoted to live

stock and dairying. For this purpose relatively large farms are demanded with the extensive use of machinery and the minimum of hand labor. This type of agriculture cannot support a dense rural population and it will be many years before we shall substitute for it what we now think of as intensive agriculture.

Immediate progress, therefore, must be made chiefly in improving the system of general farming, rather than in seeking to offer something in its stead.

The Farmer's Show

In every sense equal in importance with high yields is the matter of retaining on the farm a fair proportion of the wealth produced there. The farmer is more efficient as a producer than he is as a seller. He has handled his acres to better advantage than he has his crops.

He has not had, and is not now getting, a fair share of what the consumer pays for his products. The road from the producer to the consumer is a road of a hundred costs and profits. The consumer complains of the high cost of living. The farmer is making slight profit on his investment at present prices. The elimination of all unnecessary middlemen, and of the great waste in our present method of transacting business, is the remedy.

The farmers of the United States by their industry and sacrifice produced last year, nine billions of wealth, two-thirds of which found its way into the channels of trade. According to the

United States Department of Agriculture, it cost approximately 55 per cent of what the consumer paid for this material to take it from the farmer's side track to the kitchen of the consumer. This means that the farmer sold at his door, material worth six billions, for which the consumer paid at his door, thirteen billion dollars. It cost more to get this material from the farm to the consumer than the farmer received for producing it. The largest single item in this enormous charge was the freight and express account which amounted to approximately two and a quarter billion dollars.* This is equivalent to nearly $125 for every family in the United States, or almost one-fifth of the total cost of living for the average family.

We move our products about unnecessarily. It is a common practice to ship fruit from California, Oregon and Washington and let our own go to waste, or so neglect our trees that they fail to bear. We ship wheat out of the Dakotas, and ship back flour from Minneapolis, shredded wheat from New York, and crackers from St. Louis. Kansas apples are marketed in Colorado and Colorado apples are sold in Missouri and Kansas. Iowa produces but a small proportion of the wheat her people consume, yet fully twenty-five per cent of what she produces is marketed outside of the state in a raw condition, and the flour or its equivalent is shipped back. Rarely, indeed does a beefsteak reach our table

* Inter-State Commerce Commissioners Report, 1911.

with less than two and frequently with four freight charges. Regularly we ship our feeding cattle to Chicago, Kansas City, Omaha, or St. Louis, to be sold and shipped to one of these live stock centers to be slaughtered. The fourth shipment carries the meat to the point where it is consumed, and not infrequently it is back over the same road that the live animal came, either as a feeder or a fat animal. Kansas, the fourth largest live stock producing state in the Union, ships practically all her stock out of the state alive and all the meat her million and three-quarters of people eat, is shipped back at a high rate plus icing charges.

The responsibility for this situation does not rest wholly upon the middleman and the railroad. The farmer himself is a liberal buyer of things that he might provide at home. Moreover, he should not permit this great army of people to stand between him and his customer,—the consumer.

Cooperation Will Eliminate Waste

The farmer represents the only class of large economic importance that is not compactly organized for its own protection and progress. He buys and sells and transacts all his business as an individual without any regard for the welfare of his fellow farmer. He accepts without successful protest the price fixed by others on his wares. He pays the price fixed by others on their wares. He does not fix the price either on what he sells or on what he buys.

Economically the most important member of society, the farmer has nothing to say about the terms under which he will work. Cooperating he might easily remedy this situation and become an effective business man, and producer as well.

The American farmer thus far has refused to cooperate with his neighbor. This is largely because he has been reasonably prosperous. People who live under less favorable conditions and are skilled in overcoming the adversities of nature, are easy to organize and hold together. The American farmer will have to learn how to act collectively. It is earnestly to be hoped that he will learn this lesson from a more kindly teacher than adversity.

Utilizing the Earnings

Back of the earnings of the farm stands the equally fundamental factor of the utilization of the income in the building of a home life and in supporting religious and educational activities. Without high standards here we shall have no high civilization.

Standard of Family Life on the Farm

Conditions under which women cannot satisfactorily live, or under which children do not want to live, will not long attract good men.

There are many men in the city today performing menial labor, and living from hand to mouth, who would gladly go back to the farm where they know they would succeed far better than they have in the city, and where they know

they would have an opportunity to live a better life than the city affords, if they were assured that their wives and children would be happy there.

The woman's objection to the life on the farm is in part due to the lack of conveniences which the farm in many instances can now afford to provide, and in part to the absence of social advantages which the country community can and must provide.

The country girl must be taught to make herself as atttractive as the town girl, and must have the same opportunity to marry well as though she had been brought up in town. Also, the country bred boy must not have the parlors of the town homes closed to him because he is from the country. His manners and customs should be such as to make inter-marriage between the city and country easy and natural. In a word, the social barriers now existing between the city and country must not be permitted to stand. If they are wholly artificial, they must be eliminated by proper education. If they are natural, the cause must be removed.

Country Leaders

The great need of the rural districts is leaders. They constitute the first real step in progress. They must be found among the rural people. There has been a notable lack of leaders in the country, not because men capable of leadership have not been produced there, but because they

have not found opportunity there. Great leaders have not been developed among the farmers mainly because the farmer has refused to be led. The laborer in recent years has been easy to organize and to lead. The farmer always has been prejudiced, suspicious and in no particular degree interested in the cause of agriculture. Politically he has not been ineffective. His devotion to party in general has been greater than his devotion to occupation. The government thus far has failed to develop an agrarian program or policy because the farmers have allowed themselves to be divided between two dominant policies and have been content to vote mainly on city questions. He has not made his way into the legislative bodies in sufficient numbers to become an effective force.

A characteristic of the management of our great railway systems and of all successful corporations is that of recognizing merit within their own ranks and rewarding it with their prizes. By this means they have been able to attract and hold the best talent of the country at scarcely living wages, simply for the chance at the larger opportunity ahead. The rural community has not offered large opportunities and has not been particular about bestowing those which were at its disposal upon its own people. Labor in recent years has learned this lesson well, and it is by this means that it has become for the first time in history effective in its struggle with the

employing class. The farmer must learn this fundamental lesson before he can hope successfully to cope with the consumer against whom he must be pitted forever.

Where the Leaders Are to Be Trained

At the moment the agricultural colleges have practically a monopoly in the training of men for rural leadership. Until very recently, however, they gave no attention to the training of leaders except in the line of production. To teach men how to grow two blades of grass where one grew before was regarded as their whole duty. To prepare men for the responsibility of leadership in its entire range had not occurred to them as any part of their opportunity or duty.

Thus far the universities have practically neglected this important field. Apparently until this moment theological seminaries had not thought of preparing men especially to take charge of country parishes. The teachers' colleges and the normal schools of the country have not yet come to realize that it is part of their duty to fit men and women especially for the great task of building up the rural schools.

We must not lose sight of the fact, however, that the largest and most important task is to inspire the country people to help themselves, rather than to be helped. The one strengthens, the other destroys. They must be taught how to render effective community service. They

are the only real asset, and out of them must be builded whatever rural civilization we have. As stated elsewhere, this force has not been utilized to the limit of its capacity because the countryman has not shown an interest in country institutions. He has looked upon the farm simply as a place for making a living. To him it is a factory and not a home. He looks upon the town or the city as the place in which to spend his money and his leisure. Institutions must be established in the country that will satisfy all the requirements of the members of the family. There must be community tasks if we are to interest and hold the best of the people in the country. Unterammergau, without a community task is a decadent rural village. Oberammergau, with the Passion Play has held its best people and has commanded the attention of the world. The annual rendering of the Messiah at Lindsborg, Kansas, has become a community task large enough to hold the best stock of that community for more than a third of a century.

The Country Must Have the Benefit of Its Leisure Class

The country should have the benefit of its own leisure class. The men who have accumulated sufficient wealth to live without work, should remain in the country and devote the balance of their lives to the improvement of the rural conditions, instead of leaving the country and contrib-

uting to the welfare of the town. Since they are no longer obliged to put forth a daily struggle for sustenance, they are in a position to fight the battles of the rural class. They could become heads of local corporations for the transaction of the community business, or local cooperative enterprises, provided, of course, that the rural people were willing to recognize them as leaders and entrust them with positions of responsibility.

Development of Rural Idealism

Before we shall even approximate an ideal rural civilization, it will be necessary to develop higher ideals in the country. A class never rises above its ideals. Give to any people a vision of something better than they have known, and they will strive to attain it. Give an occupation a good name, and it is at once a better occupation. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." There must be heroes in the country as well as in the city; for where a boy's heroes are, there will be his interests also. In order to idealize rural life, it should be pictured with all the attractiveness that it should possess.

The farmer needs to appreciate his own importance to society and to civilization. He needs to realize that he holds in his hand the destinies of nations. He must feel that whether our civilization shall advance or decline, shall be determined by his skill and intelligence. Of course, at the same time, he must realize that this is a large responsibility resting upon him and that he

should have power commensurate with his responsibility.

If the American farmer is to prove an exception to the history of the world and remain the independent, thinking, progressive individual that he has been thus far, instead of becoming a peasant, as has been the case in all history, he must be trained for his task and be given a fair chance to succeed.

IV

THE RURAL AWAKENING

J. O. Ashenhurst

The rural awakening of our day is marked by the general recognition of the fundamental nature of agriculture in civilized society and the value of farming as an honorable occupation; the appreciation of the economic, social, educational, and religious problems of the farming community; and the cooperative effort of all the forces operating in rural life for the general good.

Persons not familiar with this awakening might suppose that the country life movement is a strictly American product and the creation of the Roosevelt administration. But it is evident that a movement so broad as this must be the result of causes which are rooted in the constitution of human society, and that the forces which have led to this awakening must have been working in the world for many years. Country life ideals are inseparable from the policy of conservation which, in recent years, has aroused the enthusiasm of the populace and has called for the action of legislative bodies. And the work of the farmer is fundamental: he stands

between the world and starvation. There is nothing so essential as the conservation of the soil. The policy of conservation cannot operate effectively if it does not include the interests of agriculture. And, while the rural problem as we are beginning to know it in the United States and Canada has not developed the same acute stages in other lands, there is a world-wide awakening of rural interests. It is remarkable that the idea of conservation has developed so rapidly and has extended so widely. It at first attracted world-wide attention in a conference of governors and other statesmen. The national conservation congresses have served to strengthen the public interest in the cause and the civilized nations recognize the call for an International Conference of Conservation. World-wide interest in conservation makes a world-wide awakening in rural life a necessary result.

Various influences from Great Britain and the Continent have contributed to our rural awakening in America. It is more than probable that the appointment of the Commission on country life, was a direct and legitimate effect of the matchless work of Sir Horace Plunkett and the Irish Cooperative Societies. Some of the Continental countries have dealt with rural life in a broad and masterly manner, thus contributing to the welfare of the farmer in every land. Our rural population and rural institutions have received strength from immigration from these

favored lands. These immigrants have brought with them the social impulses, love of agriculture, skill in farming, and wise forms of cooperation and the spirit of cooperation which mark the rural life of Germany, Holland, Denmark and other countries. There is a fixed rural life policy in these countries. In Denmark, for instance, an excellent system of education has been in use for many years. In the common schools as well as in the high schools, the education is related to the farmer in very practical ways and, as a result, the farmers as a class have grown into a natural aptitude for those methods of rural life and cooperation which appear to us so startling in their newness.

The rural awakening in America originated in New England. Years before the general public began to regard the serious and practical problems of the country districts there were earnest men in New England who were discussing the conditions and needs of country life. Leading men among these investigators were liberal in theology and brought to the subject minds trained to the strict scientific method and were prepared to accept whatever facts might be revealed by investigation of the conditions of rural life and the country churches in New England. As early as 1884, Samuel Dike wrote on "The Religious Problem of the Country Town" in careful and sympathetic study. A somewhat more vigorous treatment of the subject was given by President Hyde in his famous article in the

Forum on "Impending Paganism in New England." Rollin Lynde Hartt wrote an article on, "A New England Hill Town." It was written in a vein of humor and the sarcasm attracted attention and brought down on his head a storm of criticism. And so the merry game went on. The Governor of Vermont took a hand and issued a startling Fast Day proclamation in which he described a deplorable state of things in the country districts of New England.

These men were not mere prophets of evil proclaiming the wrongs they found by their investigations. They had remedies to propose. One of these was the restoration of these decadent towns by a system of country social settlements. Interesting experiments were made but the plan was artificial and never proved of any value in the solution of the problem. All these investigators, however, recognized the problem to be economic as well as religious.

Our present country life movement has had its forerunners and prophets. There have always been public-spirited men and churches and pastors who made real the vision of the Church ministering to the community. The spirit of social service has been found in many notable examples. We delight to find all our ideals of the country church movement which men think new worked out in all their details a hundred years ago in Steinthal of Alsace, by John Frederick Oberlin, of Ban-de-la-Roche, who was known even among the Catholics of Steinthal as "the saint of the

Protestant Church." During the sixty years of his pastorate he raised his poverty-stricken flock to a position of industrial prosperity and changed the barren Steinthal into a patriarchal paradise.

In the early days of our American commonwealths, before the definite beginnings of this awakening in New England, many country pastors and country churches were powerful instruments in the development of our modern civilization. The pastor on the frontier was an empire-builder. To a large extent, he created and sustained the religious, educational, and social fabric of the new forming communities. He was an important factor in the development of the new country. He supported the struggling settlers in their life of hardship, and danger. He guided them by his wise counsels and inspired them by his lofty visions. There was Manasah Cutler, whose faith and diligent labors secured the liberal provisions of the "Ordinance of 1787" and the grant of land to the Ohio company. There was James B. Finley, known as "Father Finley," and Philander Chase, who did a work for the Church in Ohio and the West that "no other man then living would have attempted." Such men who served as pastors, missionaries, and teachers among the hardy pioneers, were also forerunners of the rural awakening that is now upon us: they gave to our national life an upward impulse which will be felt through all coming time.

The changes in country life were first felt in

New England. As the fertile prairies of the West were opened to settlement the farmers were attracted to them from the thin soil of the hill towns in New England; the factory came to take the place of the farm; foreigners supplanted the original stock; and forsaken churches, abandoned farms and deserted houses became common sights among the hills and mountains. There was a pathetic reality in the lines published some years ago in *The New England Magazine,* "To a Deserted House in New England":

"From thy broad hearth in former days
The Star of Empire took its way,
And in the western sky now glows
Resplendent with the worth of those
Whose mind and heart were taught of thee."

In 1908, President Roosevelt appointed the Country Life Commission. Surely that was something new under the sun! We all thought it was rather funny and wondered what he would do next. But quite rapidly the people began to recognize the importance of the step and the movement was given the right of way. The able names that appeared as constituting the Commission made it quite impossible to treat the matter lightly.

There was no appropriation made by Congress for this commission and these men who gave their services thus loyally took up the work vigorously and in a remarkably short time had collected a large mass of information on the

conditions of country life and made a report to the President. The commission issued questions designed to bring out a statement of conditions in all parts of the United States; conducted personal correspondence investigating different lines; held hearings in thirty cities in different parts of the land to which all who were interested in the farm life were invited to express their views on matters concerning country life.

One hundred and twenty-five thousand replies were received to the questions sent out by the commission and reports were kept of the hearings. Besides this they secured a large amount of material such as essays, papers and comments which are included in the results of their services. This valuable material has never been tabulated so as to be available for use of persons interested in the various subjects. The abridged report of the commission to the President was published as a senate document, a limited number of copies being printed solely for the use of senators.

There was a great demand made upon congressmen for copies of the report, and the Country Life Convention held in Spokane, Washington, in November, 1909, requested the Chamber of Commerce of that city to secure the approval of President Taft to the publication of the report. This was done and the Chamber of Commerce of Spokane, Washington, has the honor of doing a vast service for the advancement of country life which congress failed to do.

The Country Life Commission called for a campaign of rural progress. The report says: "We urge the holding of local, state and even national conferences on rural progress, designed to unite the interests of education, organization, and religion into one forward movement for the rebuilding of country life."

It is impossible to tabulate the results of this call. The people have followed the suggestion with great enthusiasm. The Governor of Washington soon appointed a State Country Life Commission which became active at once and other states adopted means for carrying on the work. Agricultural colleges led in the movement for popularizing country life conferences. The National Corn Exposition held at Columbus, Ohio, in the winter of 1910 developed into a great and enthusiastic country life conference. The Dry Farming Congress in the so-called arid states of the far West has been captured by the movement. The Church has been rapidly falling into line and is cooperating with other forces and institutions for rural progress.

The Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church led the way among the churches, being the first to establish a department to deal with the country churches and conditions in the country. This department has made the first rural surveys of a comprehensive character that have ever been made. Its surveys of counties in Pennsylvania, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Maryland are the present models

for this kind of work. The churches of Ohio are now making a rural survey of the entire state under the direction of this department.

This survey work is in accordance with the suggestion of the Country Life Commission that "the time is now come that we should know in detail what our agricultural resources are." Agricultural colleges, experiment stations, state and federal departments of agriculture, are pursuing surveys comprehending every material resource of the nation and these departments are desirous of the cooperation of churches, in order that there may be a complete view of the conditions existing in the rural communities of the state—economic, material, social, educational, moral and spiritual.

It is just to note that the agricultural colleges have carried on a long and patient service in the interests of better farming; and that while this effort began in the desire to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before, it has gradually developed into a broad outlook on the symmetrical development of human character. These institutions have prepared the way for the recent awakening. The progress of our state agricultural institutions is in some measure an index to the progress of the rural life movement. In 1882 there were only five states in which there were experiment stations organized and the farmers did not appreciate services rendered by the schools and experiment stations. Farmers' institutes were scarcely known thirty years ago.

Within the last fifteen years there has been a great change and today the farmers are more and more looking to these scientific institutions for assistance.

Along all lines the movement is gaining in momentum. Within the past three years colleges and universities have introduced courses in rural sociology. Under the direction of certain agricultural colleges, summer schools have been held for country ministers. The movement for teaching agriculture in the common schools is advancing rapidly. States have enacted legislation providing for it. The County Work department of the Y. M. C. A. is meeting with wide acceptance and is cooperating with the Church, the schools, agricultural clubs and the Grange. Teachers' associations, farmers' institutes and the great agricultural papers have all imbibed the spirit of rural progress and are cooperating in the advance of the ideals by which country life is to be rebuilt.

The report of the Country Life Commission says:

"The time has arrived when the Church must take a larger leadership, both as an institution and through its pastors, in the social reorganization of rural life."

This expresses the conviction that is deeply felt by all the great leaders—by those whose service follows chiefly the economic progress of the country as well as by those who are more intimately associated with the moral and social

advancement of the people. And this view lays upon the Church a great responsibility. If the Church should fail to awaken in this universal awakening of rural forces and interests, all would be lost, for the moral and spiritual values of human life are the eternal values. But the Church will not fail. The Church has already caught the vision and is preparing to take the place of leadership accorded to her by the forces which are cooperating in the reorganization of country life and the application of the gospel to modern rural communities.

Within the past three years nearly all of the following organizations have come into existence for the purpose of expressing the interest of the various denominations in the problems of the country church and country life and for the fullest cooperation with other efforts to come to an understanding of the needs of the churches and to adopt methods that will enable the churches to do their full part in the re-direction of the life of the country. The organizations referred to are: The Department of Church and Country Life of the Home Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church; The Committee on Rural Churches of the United Presbyterian Church; the Committee on Rural Churches of the Baptist State Conference, New York; The Commission on Rural Life of the Oklahoma Methodist Conference; The Commission on the Study of the Rural Church Problem of the Pacific Coast; The Country Church Commis-

sion of the Cleveland District of the Ohio Methodist Conferences, and there are others forming.

The literature of the country life movement is increasing very rapidly. The agricultural papers are alive with the theme, books and pamphlets and reports of conferences are multiplying and magazine prize-articles on country life progress. Four years ago a speaker at Winona Lake Bible Conference said in regard to the country church: "A few years ago little literature could be found on this subject although a vigorous search was made in the largest libraries in Chicago and Milwaukee. Today the Carnegie Institute has a man under her direction making a thorough study of the subject." But the increase of literature on the general country life subject and on the country church in particular since this declaration was made has been remarkable. Even now those who began the study of the country church a few years ago find themselves falling behind in the effort to keep pace with the growing literature on the subject.

With literature and knowledge increasing so rapidly, with new recruits and splendid leaders coming constantly to the front in the solid advance that is being made, with the perfect accord of the leaders who seem to see eye to eye on this problem to a remarkable degree, with the tide already turning from the town to the country, with the schools introducing nature

studies and scientific agriculture, with agricultural colleges teaching the preachers and theologs, with the country preachers beginning to take pride in being country pastors, with country churches everywhere catching the vision of community service—surely the dawn of a new day for the country and the country church is upon us.

V

COORDINATION OF ALL RURAL INSTITUTIONS

ALBERT E. ROBERTS

Much has been written and said about co-operation, coordination and federation of rural forces and if one-half of the schemes that have been suggested as solutions of the problem of church unity had in them real constructive merit most of the ills of country life would have been dispelled and the country church would have come to its own. The fact is that most of the plans for cooperation and federation have come from the top rather than from the bottom up. The Church has been among the last to recognize that the permanent forces for the reconstruction of a community are the resident forces and that paternalism from the city or large town be it ever so good will never be accepted by the country community permanently. Programs and propaganda arbitrarily arranged by artificial self-constituted boards of city dwellers will not be accepted by the country folk in any large number for the farmer is not yet ready to allow himself to be dominated by the city mind. There must be an arousing of the community conscious-

ness and community conscience until a local initiative is awakened and the country people have a community point of view. The farmers and their families must set themselves vigorously to the task of making their own program for the reconstruction of their community life, or as some one has said the "building up a new and adequate rural civilization." Much harm has been done and progress has been retarded by city people assuming a patronizing attitude toward the country people and many efforts to bring together the religious forces of a community have not only failed, but have actually left the community in a worse state of religious and social unrest and disintegration than it was before any effort was made at federation, simply because the promoters have approached the problem on an artificial rather than a natural basis. For instance, a scientific survey of a rural community may reveal the fact that five churches are being meagrely supported where one or two would do the work more efficiently. The economist or rural expert could show by a cold analysis of the situation that three churches ought to go out of existence and without doubt he could show on the basis of actual results of a period of years just which three should close their doors, but to get the members of these three churches to see it from the point of view of the economist the social expert, or the professional church uniter is quite another matter.

All of this goes to show that underneath the

method the system and the machinery of federation and cooperation there must be the spirit of cooperation. In other words the agency or the person that can set up a platform in a community upon which all of the institutions of that community can unite in some things if not in all and can so lead as to develop such a spirit of cooperation that men and women of differing faiths will say "Let us get together in our church work as we have been together in our play festival, our community carnival, our farmers improvement association, etc.," has laid the foundations for true cooperation and permanent federation of social and religious forces.

The whole matter reverts to the question of leadership and leadership involves not only special preparation, ability, tact, and great wisdom, but a willingness to pay the price.

The three fundamental institutions through which rural redirection must be brought about are the home, the church and the school. Others may be supplementary but they must never supplant, they may be cooperative, but they must never be competitive. The primary question, therefore, in the consideration of federation and coordination is the proper function of these fundamental agencies, their relationship to each other and to the secondary organizations.

The home is perhaps the seat of greatest influence and the attitude of the country home, determines the efficiency of the church and the school. The church is or should be the inspir-

ator of thought and ideals and the school reflects the real conditions in the home and the church. Each has its distinct place in the community and each to perform its proper function is dependent upon the other. In so far as other institutions can aid in the proper functioning in these primary agencies they should be encouraged. When they overlap and tend to disintegrate rather than solidify the community they should not be tolerated, for without doubt class segregation, denominational rivalry and sectional feeling are among the greatest hindrances to an adequate and satisfying rural life.

The problem then is first of all to discover, enlist and train local leaders for the home, the church and the school. Second, to stand for the training in our colleges, normal schools, and theological schools of men and women who are rural-minded, who will give their lives to the country, who will become resident leaders of leaders and teachers of teachers. Home-makers who will stand for a real partnership of husband and wife, who will give the boy and the girl in the home a real share of profit and pleasure of the farm as well as a definite share of responsibility for it, who will see to it that the farm home, as well as the farm and the barn, is equipped with modern machinery and that cultural as well as vocational literature is available. Such homes would do much to stem the tide of young people city-ward and would pro-

duce leaders of thought capable of promoting cooperation and federation.

For the leadership of the Church we need pastors who are specially trained for the country ministry. Men who will not think of the country church as a stepping stone to the city church but who will recognize in the country church a life work worthy of the best minds and greatest hearts. Such a man will become a most positive factor in the coordination and federation of all country institutions, for such a man will have the confidence and love of his people and will if he stays long enough in the community to become one of them, be a leader of thought and a molder of public opinion.

And for leadership in the country school we need the school teacher who will not only impart knowledge but who will work in closest cooperation with the pastor, the home-builder and the home-maker as a social engineer for the entire community.

Such a combination of leadership would form the basis of a permanent and constructive federation of community interests, and it is difficult to see how a real federation could be formed on any other basis.

In most country communities this happy combination does not exist yet, but in many there is at least one such a potential leader—some one who not only has a vision of the possibility of a church united in spirit and coordinated with the home, the school and supplementary agencies,

but who has a willing spirit and a brave heart. The key to ultimate community solidarity is in the hands of that potential leader and any organization seeking to promote the spirit of unity in the rural church as well as the rule of the Kingdom of God in other rural institutions will do well to focus its time, strength and energy upon the development, encouragement and training of such a leader.

And a leader who has been inspired by the possibility of social and religious cooperation will be the first to recognize and teach the fact that social and religious federation cannot exist permanently without economic federation—the one is the complement to the other. There must be a religious motive in any leadership that looks to permanent and constructive economic cooperation and the church must inspire individuals with such a motive. Economic processes of advancement along cooperative lines will surely react upon the church, but the inspiration for initiative and leadership should come from the church.

That the arousing of a community consciousness and the development of spirit of federation and cooperation is being followed by a definite uniting of moral and economic forces in many communities is demonstrated by some very encouraging beginnings.

A New England town had maintained a church quarrel for many years, it had suffered from a bitter rivalry between two churches of the same

denomination as well as an unusual spirit of distrust between churches of different denominations. Various attempts were made to promote cooperative activities with but little success, for the church factions had created lines of social cleavage until practically every family was arrayed on one side or the other and neither side would compromise. Several meetings called to consider plans for federation ended in dismal failures. One day six young men who had decided in a Young Men's Christian Association meeting to live Christian lives and to join the church on the basis of giving their best services and efforts made a proposition to a young lawyer that he become their leader and that the group work for the consolidation of two of the churches. They proposed to the church leaders they would join as a group if these churches would unite. They promised moreover to enter heartily into the activities of the church and work hard for its development. Male accessions to the church had been so rare and the plan proposed was such a novel one that after a memorable meeting the contending factions came together and the church in that community became an aggressive force for righteousness. This event reacted upon every phase of community life. The spirit of cooperation inspired by the leader of a few boys became contagious and dominated the community making possible permanent federation.

Six years ago in a small town two churches

were barely existing. Outward signs of decay were evident in the ill-kept and out-of-repair buildings, there were practically no men who could be counted on for leaders, and few boys of the "teen" age in the Sunday-school. Repeated efforts to get these churches together had failed, though every one admitted that one could do the work better than the two. A careful canvass of the town revealed the fact that one man was hopeful of the future, every one else believed the situation hopeless. This one man became a leader of a group of boys. He was trained and developed and encouraged by frequent visits of a community social engineer. He was an ardent church man but his approach to the problem was from the view-point of the community; and it was only a short time before he had demonstrated the possibility of uniting in Christian and social activities including Bible study practically all of the boys of the town. Other leaders were discovered and the men and the boys worked together for community solidarity. There is but one church in that town today, but it stands as a credit to the community. It has been thoroughly renovated. A new parish house has been added to its equipment. The parsonage has been remodelled. A pastor who believes that a country church is worthy of the services of as good a man as the city can secure and who is more anxious for the extension of the Kingdom in the community than for the building up of his denomination is the leader.

An adult Bible class and three vigorous boys' classes are among the assets of the new community.

Wherever the spirit of cooperation has been developed the church heads can effect definite coordination sometimes leading to federation. For instance, in a middle western field a Baptist man who had long cherished the thought of getting two weak churches together found another man—a member of the rival Methodist Church—who shared his views. These men worked and prayed together only to find that denominational loyalty in that community was stronger than church unity. The district supervisors of both churches were consulted and suggested that in the interest of economy the better of the two buildings be used exclusively and the other closed temporarily. It was also suggested that a compromise might be effected whereby the people could have Baptist for three months and Methodist for the succeeding three, alternating on this basis for one year. The experiment was tried and the mere fact that the people came together in one house of worship, did much to break down prejudice and misunderstanding and at the end of the first year it was unanimously voted to extend the term of service of the pastors to one year, so that now there is practically a united church in that town and the people realize that the supposed differences are more imaginary than real. This happy state of affairs can be traced directly to the one personality

which created and diffused the cooperative spirit.

In many an over-churched town where the sentiment has not progressed far enough for the people to feel that they belong to one church, they are using one house of worship for preaching service, another for the Sunday-school and social center and thus individualism is giving way to a social spirit and denominationalism to a larger appreciation of the Kingdom.

Summer schools for the training of rural community leaders are conducted in many states and institutes for country pastors, school teachers, county Young Men's Christian Association secretaries are sending into thousands of rural communities men and women inspired with the vision of their community united.

Agricultural colleges are reckoning with the fact that the best farmers in the world are religious farmers and are encouraging the churches to promote farmers' clubs and institutes, furnishing lecturers and teachers for such occasions. Many of them are offering short courses for rural pastors and church workers.

All-day meetings for the discussion of the function of the country church and its relation to other rural institutions have been conducted under the auspices of the County Work department of the Young Men's Christian Association. These gatherings have been attended by representatives of eighteen leading theological schools, the United States Department of Agriculture, the National Bureau of Education, the

agricultural colleges of the east, the leaders of the great denominational bodies, the Young Men's and the Young Women's Christian Associations, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America and other organizations.

The consensus of opinion of the more than one hundred leaders that have attended these meetings is that there must be special trained rural pastors if the country church is to assume its rightful place of leadership in the community, and to meet this need many theological schools are now offering special courses for the training of pastors who are willing to give their lives to the country and who will not think of the country church simply as a preparatory school for the city churches.

These conferences have also recognized and emphasized the importance of working *with* the resident forces of the community rather than *for* them, in arousing the spirit of federation and cooperation instead of insisting that the machinery and system of cooperation be adopted.

In June 1911 at White River Junction, Vt., a state-wide get-together dinner was held under the auspices of the Windsor County Committee of the Y. M. C. A. 500 of the leading men of the State came together. The speakers included Ex-President Roosevelt and President Butterfield of the State Agricultural College of Massachusetts. The effect of the meeting has been felt even to the remote corners of the state in arousing and inspiring the educational, social

and religious, as well as the economic interests of the commonwealth. This gathering was made possible after six years of hard work of a man who saw the vision of cooperation and labored in many communities to promote the spirit of federation.

And so instances by the hundred could be cited showing the growing tendency to place the emphasis on the spirit rather than upon the letter of cooperation.

The cause for an awakening in any rural community can always be traced to a person who has a cooperative spirit and the greatest service that can be rendered to the cause of federation just now is not the promotion of schemes and systems of cooperation nor the encouragement of a great federating bureau, but by consistently and persistently teaching that every community is the arbiter of its own success and that the resident forces must be the permanent forces of its reconstruction. When the spirit of federation and cooperation is dominant the method and the system will take care of itself.

VI

THE SUPPLY OF LEADERS FOR THE COUNTRY

KENYON L. BUTTERFIELD

The key to the solution of the country life problem in America is adequate leadership. Consequently, the proper training of rural leaders is the most significant single task that emerges out of the country life movement. In considering the rural problem as a whole there are many questions for investigation. There are puzzling aspects of education and organization to be worked out. But in the last analysis everything goes back to the development of leaders who understand the problem of rural life, who can voice the real needs of the people, and who can apply a constructive program.

A very large proportion of this leadership must be found among the farmers themselves. Whether we are interested in the rural question as a whole, or whether we are anxious to develop the efficiency of particular rural institutions, we shall find that little progress can be made apart from the intelligent cooperation of those practical farmers who have influence with

their fellows. Possibly it is not too much to say that one of the supreme difficulties in solving the country life problem is the difficulty of securing adequate leadership. There are some institutions, like the church and the school, in which the paid professional expert must be the leader. But even he can accomplish comparatively little unless he have working with him intelligent laymen who also see the vision. The social institutions of American country life are essentially democratic, and these institutions can thrive only through participation of the people to be benefited, and this participation must express itself partly through the initiative of the stronger minds and wills.

With respect to particular tasks, farmers are needed as leaders, in the first place, in developing better farming. The business of farming is to be gradually professionalized; that is, more and more there must come the application of fundamental scientific principles to the actual operations of the farm. The mass of farmers cannot at once become professional farmers. It is the few who will lead the way. Consequently agriculture in its business and technical aspects needs leaders. But there are many other tasks in which the leadership of the working farmer is essential. In the Church itself and its many activities, in the management of the rural schools, in the conduct of local government, in officering the Grange and other voluntary organizations, as leaders of boys through the Sunday-

school and other agencies—in these ways and perhaps in others the working farmer finds a sphere of usefulness absolutely essential to the development of country life and its institutions.

Necessarily, however, there must be a distinct professional leadership, that is, a leadership of men and women who give their lives definitely to some sort of rural social service. Perhaps the country preacher is the most conspicuous of these leaders, because he is more nearly a permanent fixture than other professional leaders. It is true that his term of service is short, but not so short as that of the teacher. He has not always looked upon himself, nor has he been looked upon, as a community leader; but if the church is to realize its function as a community-building institution, the country clergyman must be a community leader.

The teacher ought also to be a leader for the same reason, namely, that the school as an institution has a definite social function to perform. It is difficult for the teacher of a small rural school to become a leader, simply because her term of service is so short and she is usually not at all trained in anything more than the mere rudiments of teaching elementary subjects to young children. But as the consolidated or centralized school develops and as agricultural or rural high schools are instituted, the opportunities for definite community leadership on the part of the principals and teachers of those schools will grow apace.

The county secretary of the rural Y. M. C. A. already occupies a position of splendid leadership in community building. While the specific function of the Y. M. C. A. is to reach boys and young men on behalf of a whole manhood motived by the Christ spirit, nevertheless in the application of this idea the community is reached in many ways.

There are a number of outside agencies now working in rural communities and their officials are exercising a very large degree of leadership —such, for instance, as the agricultural colleges through the extension service, state boards of agriculture, and officers of voluntary associations, such as the Grange, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, etc.

There is also a form of semi-professional leadership that ought to be developed more completely than it is; namely, that of a community service on the part of professional and business men who are located in country places. Physicians, lawyers, bankers, and merchants, and particularly the editors of distinctively country papers, may do a profoundly important work on behalf of rural community building in ways wholly incidental and yet germane to their vocations.

The question that is set for answer here is, How may these leaders be trained? At the outset it is perfectly clear that not every man who becomes an expert farmer or the head of one of these rural institutions will be an actual leader.

And yet almost any trained man can exercise some form of leadership, particularly if he is associated with some organization or institution, and he certainly is likely to be a better leader for having been trained as a leader.

On the other hand, there are a great many natural leaders who are not trained, or at least who do not have any special training. For example, it is perfectly true that a man of bright mind, social instincts, adaptable temperament, democratic spirit, and with practical methods, might make a most conspicuous success in a country parish even though he never learned the difference between a Holstein and a Shropshire! Personality is a far more dominant factor than preparation. Nevertheless, other things being equal, the value of training for leadership in rural life will hardly be disputed. The question is, How much of it should be of a special character, and how may it be given?

Insofar as this preparation is to be given by institutions of education there are perhaps three principles that must be observed.

1. We must first inculcate and develop the spirit of community service. This seems a fairly obvious truth, and yet I am not at all sure that the mere possession of a desire to be of help to another person is sufficient. There must be some fundamental grasp of the significance of the community-idea, of the inter-relationships of individual and community, of the methods by which the community-idea may be developed,

and a passion not only for helping individuals, but for helping groups of individuals.

2. Training in leadership should give an insight into the rural problem. This problem is a rather definite and unified sort of thing. It has many phases. It is related, of course, to the whole problem of our modern civilization; but it is a specialized study, and the rural leader ought to understand its content and meaning.

3. The rural leader should appreciate the relationship of his special vocation to the problem of rural community-building, and particularly the relationship of that institution which he represents to the reconstruction of agriculture and rural life. The professional leader especially can hardly work intelligently unless he has an understanding of all these things.

The special purpose of this paper is to indicate how these general principles in the training of rural leadership may be applied more specifically to the training of country pastors.

1. We need a permanent country pastorate. We can hardly expect that every man who takes a country charge shall remain there all his life any more than we may expect that every graduate of Columbia University who plans to follow teaching will become a permanent member of the faculty of that university. Many strong men who succeed in country parishes will inevitably be called to city parishes. Nevertheless, there should be developed a rural clergy as a professional group that tends to specialize itself

and that tends to induce other men to make it their life work. The idea of the country pastorate as a distinct vocation should be promulgated among young men. The need and feasibility of such permanent service should become a part of the common thinking and talking about the country church.

2. It will then follow almost inevitably that special preparation will be considered necessary for a permanent country pastorate. For it will be recognized that the rural problem differs from the city problem at many points, that the rural mind is not the urban mind, and that methods in the country church cannot be those of the city church. Recognizing then the need of a permanent country pastorate and the consequent need of special preparation for that pastorate, the question arises,

3. What should this special preparation consist of? In general it should consist in the apprehension of the rural problem and of the relation of the church to that problem. If we agree that the church has a social purpose—that is, that as an institution its work must relate itself definitely to the work of community-building—then it is entirely logical that the leader of the church in a country community shall appreciate the complete task and his relation to it.

Now, this rural problem has several aspects. In the first place, there is the scientific aspect, which attempts to learn more of the laws of nature that control the food supply. There is

the practical, or technical, aspect, which deals with the methods by which the individual farmer can best do his work of growing food. There is the business aspect, which has to do with the disposition of farm products and their proper distribution to consumers. There is the economic aspect, which asks how the farmers as a class can best succeed in their business. And then, most important of all to the clergyman, is the social, or community aspect; that is, how can the people who farm best develop personal character, cooperate for common welfare, maintain permanent and successful social institutions. The social phase of the rural question is profoundly affected by the other phases of the question; hence the alert clergyman will want to know the whole problem. It is not necessary that the individual pastor should understand all about agricultural science or farm practice or marketing of farm products, and certainly it is not expected that he should pose as an expert in these fields. Nevertheless, the more fully he appreciates the significance of all the phases of the big problem which we call the rural question, the more completely can he relate religion and the institutions of religion to the life and labor of his people.

4. How best can this special preparation be given? At present it is not given. There is no institution for training rural preachers. Interest in the subject is being aroused and various short courses, conferences on country life, and

similar devices are multiplying rapidly. Without question these enterprises are turning the attention of men now in the rural field, and even of young men desiring to become rural pastors, to the nature of their problem. But they do not represent an adequate foundation for the general task of training a rural clergy.

The theological seminaries and other institutions from which clergymen graduate are, of course, the natural centers at which training courses may be expected to develop. At the present time a number of theological seminaries are offering courses or lectures on the country church, and in the courses in sociology an increasing amount of attention is given to the rural community. One seminary has established a chair of rural sociology. Thus far, however, no institution in the country, so far as can be learned, has established a definite course of training, intended to lead directly into the country pastorate—a course of training that might be considered as a special preparation for that particular type of work. Moreover, it is quite evident that theological seminaries have their limitations. The curriculum is already an overcrowded one. The range of subjects considered necessary for the proper training of the clergyman grows wider every year. It is difficult to introduce new subjects. Then again, it is not easy to find instructors in rural sociology who can cover the whole rural problem as it ought to be viewed by the country clergyman.

Personally I doubt whether we shall secure the training needed for a country clergyman until we establish, preferably in the institutions that now train ministers, either separate schools or highly specialized courses for country clergymen. Doubtless it will be argued that the training for a country clergyman in its fundamental aspects should not differ from that of the clergyman who is to work in the city, partly because the problems of human life are the same everywhere, and partly because it is impossible to predict where a man will find his best opportunity. But let us remember that we have before us the great problem of country life as a specific question. Many agencies are at work trying to solve the problem. Shall the church meet its peculiar obligations? It can do so only through the most vigorous revival of country church activities, led by the clergyman. This new task calls for special training in just the same way as the new agricultural high school calls for men with a special training, and as the new agriculture calls for men with a special training. If the church desires to keep its place in the country life movement, it must train its preachers for their special work.

The rural problem is very comprehensive. It has so many phases that the agricultural college is pretty sure to be the only educational institution that can cover the whole field. The question arises, therefore, whether in the special training of the country clergyman the agricul-

tural colleges may not help. I am confident that courses could be arranged so that a student could take a year at an agricultural college with great profit, and that this year might well be substituted for a year either in college or in the divinity school. The student would be expected to take courses in rural sociology, agricultural economics, rural education and rural government. If he so desired, one or two courses in agriculture might be opened to him; but it is not to be supposed that he is to spend much time in studying the details of farming, though he may well understand some of the practical problems which the modern farmer has to face. The atmosphere of an agricultural college is worth something to every man intending to become a rural leader.

Without meaning to be a critic of the institutions that now prepare the rural clergy, and recognizing the difficulty of organizing new lines of work, I nevertheless urge, as a final consideration, the absolute necessity of a concerted, definite, aggressive movement for the development of adequate means of special preparation for a permanent body of country clergymen. The country church is the most important single agency in the development of the country life movement in its higher reaches, and the trained country clergyman is the greatest asset of the redirected country church.

VII

A LIVING WAGE FOR RURAL PASTORS *

F. M. Barton

We will imagine that the 148,809 Evangelical preachers of the United States go on a strike, and that the denominations appoint their officials and representatives to compel the men to go back to work, and open the closed churches. We will suppose that one representative of the preachers and one of the churches finally meet for a last hearing and, failing to agree, choose an additional man. The three arbitrators resolve themselves into a commission to hear complaints, arguments, and discussions. These pages will give a summary of the claims of the Church and its employees, and will then present the case in detail from the standpoint of the preachers—the other side will not lack for advocates.

The Contentions and Claims of the Preachers

(1.) According to government statistics, out-

* Rural or country churches are defined as those in towns or districts of 2,500 or less. Over 75 per cent of the churches of the United States are rural churches.

side of the 125 largest cities in the United States the average salary of ministers is $573. Statistics from denominational year books show the average salary of one denomination as low as $325. The highest average salary shown by any denomination is $880. Excluding the large cities this denomination shows an average of $710. The largest denomination, excluding the large city conferences shows an average of $607.79. These are quoted to verify the government figures.

(2.) The preachers claim that this salary is paid very irregularly, and in thousands of cases, the amount agreed upon is not paid in full.

(3.) The preachers claim that two-thirds of their number are not receiving living wages. One-third are serving churches able to pay a living wage, but on account of denominational duplication one-third are serving churches that cannot afford to pay any more than they are paying now.

(4.) The preachers claim that they are subjected to all kinds of humiliating treatment at the hands of the officials of the church. Many churches are ruled by some one officer who resembles the political boss. Woe to the preacher who does not gain his favor. The preachers bear this injustice for themselves, but naturally object to their wives and children suffering from it.

(5.) As an evidence of general dissatisfaction and unbearable conditions one denomination

with 6,000 preachers lost 405 of them during 1911.

Conditions That Should Arouse a United Christendom

Humanly speaking, the battle between right and wrong, is a draw, providing the Church is the only force which the Commander has working in the world. But in the discussion let us not forget that history shows that in crises He is the more apt to show His power. At a time like this it is exceedingly important that every soldier should be fit, and ready for the campaign. The officers in command of the different regiments should be filled with zeal, loyalty and hope. If their corps commander were with them sharing their hardships, and privations, as Washington fared with his soldiers at Valley Forge, it might be different. But there is a spirit of unrest and mutterings over the plenty at headquarters and the scarcity at the picket posts and on the frontier.

Seventy-five per cent of the churches are in communities or towns of 2,500 and less. Consider that the average salary of ministers of all denominations excepting those in the 125 largest cities is $573. This indicates that 75 per cent or at least two-thirds of the preachers, leaders, or officers in the Christian army are dissatisfied with the rations.

Let us allow four members to the average preacher's family and allow for:

Rent	$180
Food	365
Clothes	100
	$645

This leaves nothing for doctors' bills, insurance, carfare, vacation, etc. When it is considered that the preacher's family consists usually of five or six, the amounts quoted above are not sufficient for the absolute necessities of life.

Here are a few of the indictments against some rural churches:

Two Typical Examples of Injustice Borne by Rural Ministers

A Michigan Methodist pastor was promised $600 but last year he got but $340. He has a wife and two children. He serves two churches, keeps a horse, and drives 27 miles on Sunday. He raised $500 to buy lumber to repair the church and parsonage. The church officials offered to pay him $2.50 per day as a carpenter, but as a preacher they considered him worth only $1 per day. He worked 83 days and his local paper says improved the church and parsonage $1,000 worth. At this date of writing they had paid $5 of the $207.50.

A South Dakota pastor says: "I have seven children, and salary is $700. Last year with crop failure I got $555. This year prospects are worse. I came here two years ago from England. I could have gone on the road as a sales-

man at $112 a month salary and commission, also $5 a day expenses. I only had nineteen members, but with visiting and ordinary meetings, membership increased to ninety-eight, with one hundred and fifty Sunday-school pupils. I preached three times each Sunday, and every Sunday walked 31 miles. Then the crops failed and in six months I have lost by removal, eighty-two members. I have had to go out and work when I could get it."

Do not Pay What They Promise. $200 Behind on $520 Salary (Missionary Society Pays the Rent)

"I am the missionary pastor of two Baptist churches, two miles apart, under agreement between them and our state missionary organization that they were to pay $6 and $4 per week, respectively.

The church that was to pay $4 (20 members) has done so. But the other, the older church of 40 residents and a dozen non-resident contributing members, has not, from the start, two and one-half years ago, averaged above $5, and for over a year past but little over $2, and though I allowed them a year ago to reduce this agreement from $6 to $5 per week, they have fallen off worse than before, until now they owe me $200. Sixty dollars of that would pay all we owe and leave a good balance for needed clothes, dental work, and other absolutely necessary expenditures.

The Hard Lines of a Country Preacher

Henry Wallace, LL. D., writes, in the United Presbyterian:

"Here, for example, is an itemized statement of the expenses of one pastor of a purely rural congregation. His salary is $1,000 a year, and expenses as follows: Fuel for stove, $50; for furnace in parsonage, $100, and sometimes more; horse feed, $110; shoeing and keeping up harness and buggy surrey, $50; total, $310. This man is a tither; hence his tithe is $100. He now has left $590 for the support of himself, his wife and children, including clothes, doctor and dental bills, and all incidentals. He has an investment in the horses, buggy, surrey and harness, of $317, which he saved when preaching several years ago at a salary of $1,000. He cannot live on this $590 that is left of his salary after paying for fuel and keep of horses, and is obliged to use the income from an inheritance to the extent of $150 a year. In other words, as he puts it: 'It costs me at least $150 a year for the privilege of preaching to this congregation. It is a fine congregation, good people; but they never ask me what it costs the minister to live, but tell me about former pastors, who back in the sixties and eighties laid up some money on $800 a year.' Now I am not going to give this minister's name; but these are the facts.

"Here are some more facts from a different congregation: The ladies of the congregation

gave the minister's wife a present of fifty dollars. Out of the joy of her heart she unwisely told of the gift. The result was that the minister's salary for that year was cut down just fifty dollars. The good wife said that she had learned that it was not wise to tell of her good fortune."

How One District Raised the Salary to $750

The following is quoted from an article by N. W. Stroup, D. D., District Superintendent of the Cleveland district, East Ohio Conference. He has made the minimum salary in his district, $750. Note the cases of injustice that helped him bring about the emancipation:

"Let us mention two sad examples of injustice calling for remedy that may serve as an explanation for the action of our Country Church Commission. First, that of a pastor who was compelled to sell his life insurance policy to enable him to buy a horse and carriage, necessitated by a change of location. The brother died suddenly and his widow was deprived of the insurance money to which she was rightfully entitled. Second, a pastor with a wife and family to support, served a charge faithfully for eleven months last year, and during that time received but $248 for three churches, and yet he was required to buy a horse and carriage and harness costing $140, at the beginning of the year, and then wait until the close of the year for the balance of the $600 promised. On the

Western Frontier such treatment might be excusable, but on the Western Reserve it is out of harmony with the principles of the gospel we preach."

Here is one result of making the minimum salary $750:

"One pastor who may serve as proof of the above was continued for an additional year so that he might have time to reap the harvest of his sowing. This man recently experienced one of the greatest revivals known in that charge for a generation. The gift of $150 in this instance was instrumental in helping to make possible one hundred conversions. Thus we see that money has a very vital relationship to the Kingdom."

A Proposed Remedy

It is shown in Dr. Stroup's statement that the addition of $150 to the salary of a country minister made it possible for a pastor to remain on the charge and that his work resulted in 100 conversions in one year. It was estimated that over $2,500 would have to be raised among city churches in the district to make the minimum salary of the rural churches $750 in Dr. Stroup's district. Only $1,000 was required. When the rural churches learned of the movement, more than half asserted their independence, and raised enough to increase the salary. Some of those churches receiving aid this year will be self-supporting next year.

The following plan I believe will remedy the difficulty, and relieve the Church of God from the handicap of a discouraged, crippled leadership.

The minimum salary for ministers shall be $750 and the maximum salary $3,000.

1. Any church may pay more than $3,000 providing the church gives an amount equal to the excess of the $3,000 to ministerial relief, to be used exclusively for insuring a minimum salary of $750, and for support of ministers who have been honorably retired on account of age, or disability.

2. No church shall receive any portion of this relief fund, unless the members of said church are giving for church and ministerial support, an amount equal to the amount of taxes paid on real and personal property, by the combined membership.

That this would be opposed by pastors of large influence and large salary would be the general conclusion. But a wide correspondence with ministers of this class indicates a close sympathy, and a willingness to help their under-paid brethren. If a resolution similar to the above were adopted by the several denominations it would smoke out the members of churches who can afford to pay and don't pay. It would not be surprising to those familiar with conditions if an agreement of that kind should result in the accumulation of a large amount within five years —an amount that would enable the church to

support its veterans in a manner that would clear itself of the shame and disgrace of its present niggardly treatment.

A Source of Ministerial Supply

If some of the ministers who are feeling the strain of city pastorates at $1,200 to $1,500 a year would take the summer courses in state schools of agriculture, they would make the very best kind of pastors for rural churches.

If country churches would provide a comfortable parsonage, three acres of ground, and pay $750 per year, they could secure the very best men. For after 45 years of age, men with red blood in their veins begin to long for mother earth, and they want to be established—they like to think that they have a place that is permanent. The denomination that mans its rural churches with good men on a salary that will make them permanent, will promote the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, and will shine as the stars in the firmament.

Organization of Church Finances

An old colored minister was told by his church committee that the church had decided to raise his salary:

"I appreciate de intentions ob de bredren, but my ole back's done humped enough now, raisin de present salary."

Very few country churches have any regular

financial system. The preacher does it all, and puts his trust in the collection basket. And his faith would be rewarded if all the members were acquainted with the Master, and his anxiety for his fellow-workers.

This paying when the crops are sold makes hypocrites of the members, and servile dependents of the preachers. What crop? If the wheat crop is good they wait for the corn crop to be sold, and finally pay it out of the crop that may happen to be a failure. Is it any wonder that so much wheat grades No. 2 and oats rust, and potatoes blight?

Contract Between Church and Pastor

There is more injustice to preachers than any other class, because there is no written agreement as to what salary they shall receive. Preachers who receive $3,000 and over with few exceptions have the salary agreement in writing. But the man who needs every cent he is promised trusts to luck and a verbal agreement.

I know a church which had been paying $1,200 a year, and negotiated through their church authorities for another pastor. The authorities *understood* and so did the minister, that the salary was to be $1,200 as it had been for years. When the minister had moved they told him the salary was $1,100. "Why?" "Well, they had bought a pipe organ and they owed on it yet." This minister had to stay there four years and unwillingly paid $400 on that organ.

They used this organ to aid them in singing praises of a just God. This dishonest trick is only a sample of hundreds of others equally unscrupulous.

Promise and Fulfilment

It is not uncommon for church committees to promise a salary, which they have never paid, and never hope to pay, barring miracles, in order to get a good man.

"We are sorry we can't raise all the money. The Lord will provide," is what the pastor receives instead of the promised wages.

A minimum salary of $750 to be paid monthly, and the contract to be drawn so that it is good for a loan at a bank would help solve many difficulties, and lift a load of care from preachers' hearts. If church officers can't pay regularly, let them borrow from the funds of the denomination, the endowment funds of colleges of the churches. You can imagine bishops and church officials smiling at the security. "Have faith in the Lord, He will provide." What is sauce for the official ganders ought to be sauce for the ministerial geese that are being plucked for down to make up the beds, on which reprobate members imagine they are to be carried to the skies.

Jesus said "When Thou takest thy gift to the altar and rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave thy gift," etc. If in the Judgment it were suggested that it would be well to make good unpaid pledges to preachers, there might be general consternation.

The Church Entitled to Support as a Social as well as a Religious Organization

Sixty-five per cent of farmers own their lands and homes. The land owners who rent or hire their farms operated are not the large factor in providing the preacher's salary. But those that can be reached whether Christian men or not, can afford from selfish motives to promote the interests of the church nearest to their land holdings. It would be better for the owner if the renter were a Christian man. The returns from the farm would be more satisfactory, and its appearance improved. But if the country church provides Sunday-school for the renter's children, the influence from even that will make more profitable the landlord's holdings.

The merchants, business men, blacksmiths, and artisans of the community are much larger factors than the landlords and can well afford to support a church. *If there were only* one church in a community, I think they would.

The taxpayers support the schools. School taxes are paid with more satisfaction than any other taxes. Schools do only part of the work that prevents people growing up in ignorance and becoming a burden upon the community.

These land-owners, business men, whose interests are near the country church can well afford to support it—and support it so liberally, that with the amount given by the members, the best pastor for the place can be secured.

VIII

THE ENLARGING IDEAL OF THE COUNTRY CHURCH

E. S. Tipple

When we left the seminary a quarter of a century ago, most of my classmates went to country circuits or small village churches, while I, for some reason which I have never yet been able to discover, found myself appointed by the bishop to a church in New York City, scarcely half a block from Broadway. Not long ago one of my friends of the seminary days confessed that in the early years he had a notion that I "looked down on him," because he was a country preacher. Ah, if he had only known how I envied him! How, as I walked the unsympathetic streets of that great, boisterous, unfeeling city, or climbed the stairs of foul tenements, I longed for the open spaces of the country and the simplicity of a country church! Look down upon the man who has a chance to breathe deep, to think without haste, to look far, to shepherd God's flocks on the hills? This is the man to look up to, to felicitate, even to envy.

Who that knows the modern city, with its amazing growth, its appalling religious needs,

its dire menace, its sordid commercialism and relentless competition, its unbridled love of amusement, its seeming indifference to soul-culture, would think of looking for the ideal parish in the city? Work there is, and an abundance of it, demanding all there is of any man who may be called of God to undertake it. But I have long felt that the ideal parish, that is, the parish to be desired and coveted, is the country parish; that the fortunate minister is the one whose portrait is drawn by Wordsworth in "The Excursion":

> "The calm delights
> Of unambitious piety he chose,
> And learning's solid dignity; though born
> Of knightly race, nor wanting powerful friends.
> Hither, in prime of manhood, he withdrew
> From academic bowers. He loved the spot—
> Who does not love his native soil?—he prized
> The ancient rural character, composed
> Of simple manners, feelings unsuppressed
> And undisguised, and strong and serious thought,
> A character reflected in himself,
> With such embellishment as well beseems
> His rank and sacred function."

What an attractive picture! So also is Oliver Goldsmith's exquisite sketch of "Sweet Auburn," with its soft-toned landscape, its evening sports of the village folk, its sounds of life from the cottage homes, and its gentle and earnest country preacher. It will probably be said, however, that these are descriptions of country par-

ishes of an earlier generation, and that the country parish of today is far more prosaic, more commonplace, and more uninviting. But isn't this largely a matter of point of view? James Russell Lowell in his Harvard address speaks of the parson in olden times as being what his name implied—the chief person of the community. In the colonial period of our history, the foremost place was occupied by him, and in the rural districts of New England especially, as Thomas Wentworth Higginson says, he was the most loved of men, and at times the most feared. The years have brought changes, many of them, and particularly has country life changed. There have been depreciations of farm values, young people have gone away, foreigners have taken the place of the native born, the Church seems no longer to hold its place of influence in the community. All this is true, and yet the country parish of today offers as never before a field of superb opportunity, and makes a glorious appeal to heroism and devotedness.

It may be that the country minister cannot again be as in the early New England days the village oracle, but he may be a community leader in noble enterprises, worthy the ambitions and gifts of the best of men. Is it true, as Phillips Brooks said, that it is the absence of the heroic element in our modern Christianity which marks the difference between it and primitive Christianity? It cannot be wholly true, for the cry of far away fields, in foreign lands,

brings a quick response from hundreds of our noblest young men and young women. There are still those who are not disobedient to the heavenly vision, and who leave all to follow the Master across tempestuous seas. But not all the mission fields are in the Orient or Africa. What of the challenge of the country parish? Is there no appeal to the heroic in the barren fields of country life, the isolation, the narrowness, the want and sorrow which abound wherever people live? Much of America is fast coming to be missionary territory, which can only be possessed in Christ's name by those who have the missionary spirit.

The country parish is not to be regarded as "a stepping stone to something better," something to be endured for a year or two, until a more desirable opening in the large town or city is found; it is a part of the world-kingdom of our Lord, as important as any other part. When John Keble, one of England's rarest ministers, who was always a country minister, having gone from a country rectory to Oxford to be educated, and leaving Oxford to minister for a generation and more in rural England, was about to be ordained, he wrote to a friend: "Pray for me; pray earnestly, my dear, my best friend, that He would give me his grace, that I may not be altogether unworthy of the sacred office on which I am, rashly I fear, even now entering; but that some souls hereafter may have cause to bless me. Pray that I may be free from vanity, from

envy, from discontent, from impure imaginations; that I may not grow weary, nor wander in heart from God's service. . . . Without any foolish affectation of modesty I can truly say that the nearer the time approaches, the more strongly I feel my own unfitness and unworthiness for the ministry; and I must have all the help I can get in the awful and difficult preparation; do not, therefore, forget me in your prayers." Whoever enters upon his work in such a spirit will regard his God-given task with such humility of heart, and with such a high and solemn regard for his calling in Christ Jesus, that he will not draw back from any field, town or country. It will not be a hardship to him to be sent to the crossroads, to the high hills, to the out-of-the-way places; he will thank God, as did Alexander Maclaren, the prince of English expository preachers, that at the beginning of his ministry "he was struck down and remained for twelve years in an obscure place."

But the country parish is not so undesirable as one might imagine. There are hardships, to be sure, but there are also many high and holy privileges. The country parish offers many things to a man who has eyes to see. For one thing it gives him a chance now and then to look at the stars. The country preacher's world is not a world of rocks and stones merely, or chiefly. He can walk in the open fields; he has wide horizons; flowers spring up at his feet. For him birds sing, and streams flow by to the

sea. He lives in the open country. All of God's out-of-doors is his to revel in. Men used to wonder why Charles Kingsley could be content with the little country parish of Eversley, made up of three small hamlets, peculiar for nothing, as he said, but want of houses and abundance of peat bogs,—a most unpromising and unattractive field of labor. When that great nature lover began his ministry at Eversley, there was not a grown man or woman among the laboring class who could read or write. The church was nearly empty. The farmer's sheep were pastured in the churchyard. The alms were collected in a wooden saucer. A cracked basin held the water for baptism, and beside the altar, covered by a moth-eaten cloth, there stood one old broken chair.

How could a man be content with such a place when London, for example, would gladly welcome him? On one occasion he wrote, "I love home and green fields more and more, and never lust either after Babylon or the Continent." Why should he? His heart was in Eversley. Life in that quiet parish was never uneventful. He never found it dull or monotonous. True, his love of nature was a veritable passion. "Don't study matter, for its own sake," he exhorted his people, "but as the countenance of God." "Study the sky, study water, study trees, study the sounds and scents of nature." "Study the form and color of leaves and of flowers, and the growth and habits of plants, not to classify

them, but to admire them and to adore God." But much as he loved nature, he loved man even more. All his parish labors had their source in his passion for ailing, decrepit, battered men and women whose lives were narrow, impoverished, and without hope. He was the intimate friend of everyone in the parish. Because they loved him, they familiarly called him "uncle," nor did he resent it. It has been told more than once how he became all things to all in his parish, how with the farmer he discussed the rotation of crops, and with the laborer the science of hedging and ditching. Children loved him and ran after him, tugging unafraid at his coat. Daily he visited from house to house. What a beautiful picture this of England's most popular preacher in his generation, cultured, scholarly, book-loving Kingsley, going from door to door in a rural community just from sheer love of it!

Nor must it be forgotten that distinction and fame came to this Eversley parish minister. He was not "lost in the country." It was not long before a path was worn to his door, and hither came men and women from all parts of the world. That country parish had become a world center. From everywhere people wrote to him concerning their difficulties. Strangers asked advice on delicate questions of conscience and conduct. Skeptics asked him concerning their doubts. By his fidelity to his opportunity, by his refusal to leave the country which he loved

and the needy folks whom he loved more, by his writings in the interest of the oppressed and downtrodden, by his appeals for justice for men everywhere, he made as large a contribution to the progress of the Kingdom of God in the nineteenth century as any man who preached in any city pulpit, or worked in any city parish in the same period.

What I am trying to say is this, that for one who loves nature, who is sensitive to its charms and can utilize its power, the country parish offers an inviting field, and that a man may win distinction there as well as anywhere else and wield an influence as far reaching. No man has other limitations upon his activities than his own heart. "The field is the world," said Jesus. There is no east, no west, no home field, no foreign field, no country parish, no city parish to that minister, who, like his Master, carries the world on his heart. Wherever stationed, he is at the center:

> "Where our duties' task is wrought
> In unison with God's great thought,
> The near and future blend in one."

It was said in my hearing not long since that the time would soon come when it would be as great an honor to be a successful country minister as a city minister. I replied that the time was already here, and had been here ever since Charles Kingsley put Eversley upon the map of the world.

Again, the country parish offers a man a chance to meditate deeply on things of the spirit. The chief business of the preacher is still to preach. Whatever the demands upon him for leadership in community service, however many or varied the tasks laid upon him in city or town, the supreme work of the Christian preacher is to preach. Great silences are necessary to great thoughts. Where in the turbulent modern city can one find quiet? The roar of traffic fills the streets; the clangor of bells penetrates to every room. The darkness brings no relief. The city is one vast, seething cauldron of noise. What opportunity is there for reflection, for meditation, for pondering upon the deep things of God? Yet one must have solitude—

> "If chosen man could never be alone
> In deep mid-silence, open-doored to God,
> No greatness ever had been dreamed or done."

One of the joys of a country parish is that it gives a man a chance to think, to brood over God's words to men, to write down God's thoughts, and to reach a larger audience with the printed page. It was from the experiences of a country pastorate that Richard Baxter wrote his immortal book, "The Reformed Pastor"; and because he had a country parish that he could write his "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," the "Call to the Unconverted," and more than a hundred and fifty other volumes. There are

many and great advantages in being a country preacher.

And if he will, the country preacher may have for recreation, and without interfering with his sacred duties as a shepherd of the flock, a garden. A garden! An old fashioned garden! What delights there are in the very mention of the word! The most prized picture of my father which I possess is of the dear man, when past eighty, bent with years, but with face aglow, he stood among the flowers of his loved garden caressing them as in the long ago, and as through the years he had caressed his children! "There is no love so great, save that of a woman," says a modern English writer, "as a man's love for his garden. Its charm is ever fresh when the sun shines brightly, or even in the depth of winter, for then it is the time for discussing possibilities, and the gardener is planning, waiting, and preparing for the advent of spring and the joys of summer. It may not be a very elaborate garden; but it is just the little bit of God's earth that is left to the tending of one man and his partner in life, a Paradise as beautiful as Eden."

For years I was familiar with a painting by Dyce, showing George Herbert, "holy George Herbert," as he was called, walking in his garden at Bemerton. But even if one does not know the picture it takes little imagination to see that tall, erect, thin man, with a benignant face, and a gracious, courtly air, yet humble

withal, walking along the Nadder, as it flows silently at the foot of the garden, slipping quietly by on its way to the spire of Salisbury Cathedral, three miles away. This Bemerton garden is much the same—I saw it not long since—as it was when the Country Parson walked amid his flowers, softly singing his own beautiful hymn:

"The God of love my shepherd is,
And he that doth me feed,
While he is mine, and I am his,
What can I want or need?

He leads me to the tender grasse
Where I both feed and rest;
Then to the streams that gently passe:
In both I have the best."

A wonderful country parson was saintly George Herbert, as may be seen by anyone who will read his famous book, "The Country Parson," which is as truly autobiographical as Newman's "Apologia," and one of the most beautiful things said of him was that he himself became a country minister that he might show how it could become a field fit for intelligent, energetic, stately and holy living, and for genuine devotion and self-sacrifice on behalf of the unlearned and simple folks of his small parish, and it is with a like spirit and a like purpose that chosen men, trained men, must enter upon the conquest of the country.

The country church offers a field of particular need and unusual opportunity. There are

the problems of a declining population, of lack of workers, of poor financial methods and inadequate resources, of the maintenance of too many churches in dwindling communities, of buildings unfitted for modern forms of church work; there are social problems, a thousand of them, which have sprung out of the changed conditions of country life, and the readjustment of the times, all combining to make a task worthy the strongest, most zealous minister.

And the opportunities? They are as numerous as the problems. The country preacher will have the opportunity today of cultivating reverence, of encouraging simplicity of worship, of developing a deep and restful type of piety, of keeping alive in the hearts of men a sense of the sublimity and beauty of God's world, of idealizing country life, of interpreting the farmer to himself, of putting in modern terms the teachings of Jesus Christ concerning one's relations to others of the community, of identifying himself with the joys and sorrows of people in whom God is interested, of inspiring them to intellectual and social culture, of encouraging them in innocent and healthgiving amusements, of advising them as to their material interests, of cultivating patriotism, and in innumerable ways helping on the Kingdom of Heaven. As a recent writer said, "The man with a sense of pure neighborliness, patience to understand conditions, love that will serve all the sides of

human life and will make the gospel touch every side and province of man's nature, will find the country church a field of never-ending interest, and one that demands and repays the very best that he can give." And this is true.

IX

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF GETTING A LIVING IN THE COUNTRY

THOMAS NIXON CARVER

"He who sows the ground with care and diligence acquires a greater stock of religious merit than he could gain by the repetition of ten thousand prayers."—Zoroaster.

Wherever the struggle with nature has been severe and man has been forced to exert himself to the utmost to protect himself against his hostile surroundings, he has given to his work a religious or semi-religious character. Sowing and reaping have become such serious matters, and the life of the people has depended so intimately upon the success of the season's farming, that nothing has been left undone which the people imagined would help in the work or insure a harvest. The preparation of the soil and the sowing of the seed have become religious ceremonies, and the harvesting of the crop has been followed by a period of festivity and thanksgiving, of which our national Thanksgiving festival is a somewhat idealized survival. The oldest recorded hymns of the Indo-European branch of the human race are agricultural

hymns. The ancient Peruvians seem to have worked out a very perfect calendar, as the result of their efforts to make the seasons of sowing and reaping conform to the laws of the universe.

The development of modern science and its application to agriculture have tended to discredit the purely ceremonial aspects of the religion of rural people. They have come to see that the rites and observances with which they have accompanied their work have had nothing to do with the germination of the seeds, the ripening of the crops, or the destruction of pests. There has, therefore, been a tendency to assume that religion itself has nothing whatever to do with agriculture or successful industry of any kind. A little deeper insight, however, into the nature of religious problems will tend to reverse that decision. Probably the highest form of religious thought in the world today is that which regards the universe as not merely created by divine power, but as momentarily recreated or sustained by the continual recreative activities of the divine will. That which we call for convenience a law of nature, or an observed uniformity in natural procedure, is merely an observed uniformity in the operation of the divine will; and that which we sometimes call a supernatural event, or miracle, is merely an act of the divine will which does not come under one of its observed uniformities. When we accept this point of view frankly and fully, and

conclude further that the most satisfactory way of discovering what the divine will really is is to study its uniformities rather than its rare and exceptional acts; and, further, when we depend more and more upon the uniformities of that will and less and less upon its unusual manifestations, we shall not be less but more religious. That is to say, when we fully realize that we get a more complete knowledge of the divine character by learning how that will acts all the time, every day, normally, regularly, as a matter of course, than we do by learning what it has done and may do under very rare and exceptional circumstances, and then bend all our efforts toward conforming to the ways of God thus constantly and uniformly manifested, rather than depending upon special manifestations,—we shall no longer be under the reproach of having forgotten the Author and Giver of all good things, but will be showing a higher recognition of divine providence than was ever shown by the ceremonial religions of the past.

Another conclusion to which we should be forced by the acceptance of such a religious belief as this would be that they who most fully conform to what we call the laws of nature, or the uniformities of divine procedure, are showing in the highest sense obedience to God; and that they who through this conformity to the regularities of the divine procedure succeed and flourish become by that very fact the "chosen

people," or the "children of God." Then our efforts would be directed not toward securing special favors from the Ruler of the universe by accompanying the plowing of the land and the sowing of the seed with elaborate religious ceremonials, but by studying the conditions of the soil, the laws of germination, plant nutrition, etc., understanding thereby that we are studying the laws of the divine procedure. And the people who obtain the fullest and most complete knowledge of God by this kind of study, and show the most complete obedience to His universe thus discovered, are His chosen people, by whatever name they may be called. If they who conform to the laws of the universe tend to flourish, to prosper, to multiply, and to survive in the struggle for existence, they will not only be the naturally selected, but they will be obeying the first command in our sacred Book, to "Be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

Man has been able to achieve his dominion over the rest of the animal creation (1) by reason of his greater knowledge of and control over the forces of nature; (2) by reason of his greater self-discipline, whereby he has subordinated the lesser to the greater interest, the whim of the moment to the needs of the future; (3) by reason of his greater power of coopera-

tion with his fellows, under which he has combined his efforts with those of his fellow man on a larger scale and for more distant ends than the less intelligent brutes have been able to do. If the possession of these powers has given man his dominion over the rest of the living world, any branch of the human race, which combines these same powers in larger measure than other branches, will be able to hold dominion over them as surely as over the fish of the sea, the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field. Moreover, any group, or class, or neighborhood within the nation which develops these powers more highly than the rest of the nation will achieve the same result. And the church which succeeds best in developing these powers will become the true church, or the church of God, because its people will have become in this deep and fundamental sense the people of God. That is to say, the people who conform most closely to the will of God as manifested regularly, normally, all the time in the laws of the universe are the most truly obedient to the will of God, and this obedience brings its normal reward in the form of greater prosperity. And if they succeed and flourish by reason of this conformity or obedience, that is a visible sign that they are chosen by God himself for the peopling of the earth and the building up of His kingdom. The church which can show definite evidence of this kind of salvation need not lay great emphasis upon historic

origins, nor engage in windy contests over historic questions. Which is the true church is not a question of the past. It is a question of the future. It is not a question of origin. It is a question of achievement. In reply to the question, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" it can reply, "Come and see."

The church that can show such results, that can say to the unchurched, our way of life is good because it works well; our people conform to the laws of health and therefore have good health; they conform to the laws of agricultural production, therefore they have good crops; our people conform to the laws of inward peace and harmony, they do not fret and worry over trifles, they economize their energies and do not waste them in fretfulness, in idleness, in dissipation, in brawling, nor in ignorance, therefore our people are happy,—the church that can make such an appeal as this without exaggeration, the church that can point to actual achievement of this kind, would have a very effective appeal to the unchurched, and would have something pretty definite around which the loyalty and enthusiasm of its members could develop.

It is particularly noticeable that in any good farming country the good land tends to get more and more into the hands of the best farmers, for the simple reason that such land is worth more to a good farmer than to a poor farmer. From this fact we must predict that

if Christians are better farmers than non-Christians, then Christians will come into possession of the farms, and the rural districts will become Christianized; otherwise they will not. But if non-Christians prove to be the better farmers, then they will come into possession of the farms, and the rural districts will become paganized. We need not expect any miracle to happen to prevent these results, or to save the church from its own inefficiency. In view of this hard and unrelenting principle, how futile it would seem to discuss such questions as, Should the church concern itself with temporal affairs? or Should the church concern itself with the economic problems of its community? The answer is not it *should,* but it *must.* Unless the church makes itself a positive factor in the building of the rural community and rural civilization, it will have to get out. And in the main the church must rebuild the rural community through its own members, by making them better farmers, better citizens, of more value to the community.

But if the question is asked, should the minister teach scientific agriculture, the answer is not so simple. There are a good many things besides scientific agriculture necessary to the making of good farmers, just as there are a good many things besides military science in the making of good soldiers. In the making of good soldiers there are necessary, for example, such qualities as courage, loyalty, and amena-

bility to discipline. And there are such qualities as industry, sobriety, thrift, and mutual helpfulness, together with a love for the open country, the trees, the crops, and the animals, necessary to the making of good farmers. Scientific knowledge is not difficult to obtain by those who possess the moral qualities which will enable them to use it,—such as the spirit of studiousness, willingness to be taught, and willingness to improve their methods when a better way is shown. These moral qualities are not so easily obtainable as the scientific knowledge itself. They must be developed by a long course of training, sometimes lasting over generations.

Since individual gifts differ, it is difficult to say just what each minister should do toward the making of good farmers; but one thing is certain, he must achieve that result; otherwise he is a failure. One may achieve this result if his preaching is a clarion call to high endeavor on the part of his hearers; another if he stimulates a love for the animals and the crops, the open country, the winds and the stars; another if he appeals to the still small voice of conscience, so that every one who hears him will do his work more faithfully and better therefor; another by appealing to patriotism and the love of mankind, to show themselves in the production of better crops for the feeding of the nation and the hungry multitudes; and another if he merely teaches agricultural science, or

shows the farmers how to market their products economically. In any or all of these ways, and many others beside, the preacher may make himself and his church an essential factor in the building of a rural civilization, in filling the rural districts with Christians, in laying deep the economic foundations of the kingdom of God. But he will fail, and deserve to fail, if his preaching, however popular it may be, or however pleasing from an æsthetic standpoint, does not result directly or indirectly in a greater economy and utilization of human energy in his community, and in the greater success of the people to whom he ministers as a result of that economy and utilization.

Just at the present time social service is the keynote of all our religious campaigns. We are beginning to learn that the success of a religious revival is to be tested not wholly by its effect upon church attendance, but by its effect upon the death rate; not by its effect upon church contributions, but by its effect upon the rate of wages; not by its effect upon prayer-meeting attendance, but by its effect upon the food supply. But the point which needs emphasis above everything else is that all useful work is social service, even though we happen to get our living by it; and the greatest social service any church can perform is to sanctify the regular occupations of its members, and make them feel that they are doing religious work when they are growing crops, or mining coal, or manufac-

turing shoes or clothing. This is particularly applicable to the country and country life, where the regular occupation of the average member brings him into the very closest contact with the great forces of nature, where he has a more intimate experience of the creative power of the divine will, where it is easy to see that one is working with God when one adjusts one's methods of cultivation to the needs of the soil and the crop which one is growing.

X

REMARKS ON PRESENTATION OF REPORT OF COMMISSION

HENRY WALLACE, Chairman

The Commission upon the Rural Church have realized from the first that if the results of the Men and Religion Forward Movement in the cities are to be permanent, it must be extended to the country towns and the open country. The more study we have given the subject, the stronger has been the conviction. The reasons are obvious.

According to the census of 1910, 53.7 per cent of our continental population live in the open country and in country towns of less than 2,500 population. It is from the rural population that the cities of this land, and of all lands, and in all ages, have drawn the vigorous blood with which to replace the enormous human waste incident to city life. It may in fact well be doubted whether cities of 50,000 and over could continue to govern themselves, to prosper, or even to continue an existence worth while, without this stream of fresh blood from the country, with its cool nerves, firm muscles and good habits.

The rural population furnishes about 90 per cent of the ministry, without which neither the churches of the city nor of the country can survive. It has furnished the great majority (estimated at from 75 to 80 per cent) of the successful business and professional men in the cities. The city is the testing ground of humanity. It wears out country men and families as it wears out country-bred horses; or to state it in another way: The surplus population of the rural districts is fed into the maw of the city as we feed grain into a thresher; and as the result we have much straw, of more or less value, grain of various grades, and tailings.

The men behind the Men and Religion Forward Movement have the conviction that if we are to have a permanent civilization, the most that is possible must—through its Social Service Department—be made out of the tailings; that the brotherhood of man must be practically illustrated through its Community Service; that the physical health, the mental health and the efficiency of boys must be developed to the utmost through its department of Boys' Work; that by its evangelistic work the gospel of Christ must be demonstrated to be the only solution of the problems that rise between those who have and those who have not, between those who have much and those who have little. The men who organized this Movement have seen that if humanity is to do well for itself, it must do good to others, must be altruistic in its motives; and

hence the Movement lays large emphasis on missions. They have seen further, that all its departments must be bottomed on a thorough knowledge of the Book in which God reveals himself to us; and hence it emphasizes Bible study and Bible teaching. But with all this the work can not be permanent until it is carried to the source from which every city in this land and in all lands draws its new, fresh, virile blood—the country town and the open country.

This great Movement, destined to be world-wide, could have been possible only in the fullness of time. It was not possible in that pioneer stage when the individual was dependent solely on his own right arm for the support of himself and his family; when the salvation of his own individual soul was not only an important thing, but the only important thing. It would not have been possible in that later stage—and in some sections of the country a very recent stage—when the salvation and Christian education of the family was the Christian ideal, and when churches were merely groups of families intent only on family salvation. It could not have come in that later stage, when to add members to the church on profession was the crowning glory of the preacher, whether pastor or evangelist; when we sowed much seed, much of it grew, but through lack of cultivation was smothered by weeds. It could not have come—nor can it come now—so long as and where churches are competitive instead of cooperative,

and are building up defenses against each other with materials not always quarried out of the Rock of Zion.

It could not come so long as the spread of the gospel was regarded as mainly woman's work, and men were permitted to think on the spiritual side of their heads in nickels and dimes, while with the material side they thought in hundreds and thousands of dollars. In other words, it could not come until religion was regarded as a man's job. It could not come until Christian business men with a world-vision began to see that the pure daughters of the upright were not safe, even though living in the parental home, so long as red lights burned on the other end of the avenue; that the health of the wealthy was not safe so long as the slum and disease breeding tenements were allowed to exist in the same city. It could not come until they began to see that neither business nor even our free institutions were on a safe foundation until the laborer received his proper reward; until by the development of the community spirit we grasped as never before the full meaning of the Christian doctrine, the very core of the teaching of Jesus —the essential brotherhood of man.

The vision is not yet quite clear to any of us. We see as yet "men as trees walking." Clear vision will come in time to those who seek for it; but it must include not only the city with its palaces and its hovels, its paradises and its slums, but also the country town and the open

country as well, from which the city, and all cities, must ever draw the fresh blood needed to maintain the vigor or even the continued existence of urban civilization.

To the man who does not know life in the open country as it really is, who knows it only on the surface, the problem of realizing the ideals of the Men and Religion Forward Movement among the people of the fields may seem simple and easy of solution. He may say that the life of the country is in itself simple; that the country has neither palaces nor slums; that it has neither millionaire nor pauper; that there are no labor unions, no strikes; that there are no "publicans" to be despised nor gross "sinners" to be shunned; that country life develops some of the cardinal virtues of Christianity—industry, economy, frugality; that there are no temptations to steal and few opportunities to cheat; that there is neither extreme poverty nor extreme wealth; that there is no lavish display of dress and equipage; and seldom in the open country either saloon or brothel.

He may go even farther, and maintain in truth that the farmer is the most religious of humankind, because living near to nature and nature's God; that he is a constant witness to the magnificence of the summer's storm of wind, rain and sometimes hail, the cruel and pitiless blast of the winter's blizzard as well as the genial spring shower; that for him the lily blooms and the flower opens to embrace the re-

freshing dewdrop; that for him the birds sing the sweetest songs and the fields wave with golden grain. And all this is strictly true.

The problem seems entirely different to the man who knows country life as it really is. The difficulty in realizing in the open country and the country towns the ideals of the Men and Religion Forward Movement do not grow out of any lack of intelligence, for the rural population have a higher average intelligence than the urban; nor do they grow out of any lack of either religious instinct or capacity. His nearness to nature makes him reverent toward God, the great Power behind nature.

The prime difficulty, speaking generally, is that the men of the fields are a mass of individuals with no social coherence, with no organization, and with an enormously exaggerated idea of their own independence and self-sufficiency; hence without social ideals and native leadership. This was not so for the first half of the nineteenth century. The causes of this change are not all religious nor social. but mainly economic, and for their existence the farmer can scarcely be held responsible. To discuss these causes in detail would take me far afield; but let me remind you of some facts you have long known:

The opening up of a tract of the richest land on which the sun shines, seven hundred miles square, west of the Mississippi, from 1870 to 1900—land that needed neither tilling spade nor ax to fit it for the plow, ruined New England

agriculture and seriously injured the agriculture of the middle states. The enactment of the homestead law, a free gift of a quarter section to every landless man who wanted it; the free gift of an empire of land to railroads, which must be put under cultivation before it could furnish traffic, so stimulated agricultural production, that it ceased to be profitable. For thirty years the farmers of the middle west were forced to feed the cities of the Old World as well as the New with food at about half the cost of production; to mine their soil fertility and sell it at the cost of mining. The young people of the west, like those of the east, seeing nothing in farming under these conditions, but a life of drudgery and unrequited toil, accepted the offer of the city of higher wages, shorter hours and fellowship, good or bad, with their kind.

The phenomenal growth of the cities, and the success of the farm boy everywhere, stimulated the ambition of the ambitious and the greed of the covetous. The city grew in population, and the country continually declined. Within the last fifteen years prices rose, rents rose, and land in the west doubled in price. The middle-aged farmer, with his wife and smaller children, moved to town to take it easy, thus half emptying the rural school. There are in my State three schools which last year did not average one pupil, and hundreds with less than six pupils. The rural school is for the most part taught by

a town-bred miss, while awaiting an attractive offer of marriage, or that failing, acquiring the three years' experience necessary to secure a position in the city schools. The country churches are largely filled by young preachers or students of theology, trained in the seminary to tell in a pleasant way to a city congregation what they think; and with an ear ever open to a call from a city church. The teacher can not teach in terms of farm life, because as a rule she knows nothing about it and does not want to know, because it is not to her taste. The preacher can not preach, as Jesus did, in terms of country life, because he does not know the heart of the farmer.

This explains why in the country life surveys which have come under my notice, taking in those churches which were in existence ten years ago, about one-fourth are growing, speaking generally, one-fourth standing still, one-fourth dying and one-fourth dead. This tells why, with exceptions here and there, there is no social life in the community, and can not be so long as the farmer and his young folks are steadily attracted townward or cityward.

The great superabundance of denominations, and in some sections of churches, renders the problem vastly more complicated and difficult. Matters which evidently neither Jesus nor His disciples thought of sufficient importance to warrant explicit teaching—as for example, forms of church government—divide the churches in

the country and little town, until of those who sincerely desire to serve the Lord, there are barely enough to keep the church alive, to run the machinery, but not enough of either financial or spiritual power to make any impression on the unchurched, numbering from 30 to 70 per cent of the total population. The support of the church under these conditions involves often great sacrifices, so great that the real object of the preaching of the gospel is often overlooked, namely, to make Christians, not Presbyterians or Methodists or Congregationalists or Baptists. The foreign missionary must perforce drop these impediments and devote himself to saving souls; and he succeeds. The country and the village pastor, largely because he insists on lugging them along with him, often fails in comparison with his brother in the foreign field.

This, then, is the diagnosis: The farmer looking constantly townward or cityward, with no satisfactory school life, because the teacher looks townward, nor satisfactory church life, because the preacher, even if country-bred, is trained for the town and looks townward; no social center save at the church, and that for the members and adherents only, or else stained with the dollar mark; small congregations; preachers paid less on an average than the coal-miner or artisan; with an oasis here and there, where some servant of God has seen a vision of a rural civilization on a sound economic basis, meeting the intellectual, the social and religious

wants of the boy and girl born and raised in the open country.

The realization in the open country or in the country town of the ideal for which this Movement stands requires more, much more, than the preaching of the gospel as it is ordinarily preached. It involves the reconstruction of rural life. It involves turning the attention of the rural teacher, the country preacher, the farmer and his family countryward instead of townward.

There must be a rural social center that will gratify the desire, divinely implanted in the breast of every human being, for fellowship with his kind and with those of his own age and similar tastes. If the boys and girls of the open country are compelled, as they are now in the majority of country places, to go to town for their amusements, they will, if they can, go to town to live. If the men and women of the fields are to develop into fine human beings or secure a fair return for their labor, there must be some social center where, by congenial fellowship with each other, they may learn to know and trust each other.

The preferred social center in any rural community is the rural church. It is already organized, and is ordinarily made up of the best class of people in the community. It has for its pastor an educated man, who has seen something of the world of men, and who should be, and is if fit for a place, the ablest all-around

man in his community. If he has the right personality and the vision of an ideal rural civilization—a country community cooperating for good living, for intellectual improvement, for a satisfactory social life and for full expression of the religious life; if he can so adapt himself to his environment as to know the heart of the farmer and unfold the teaching of the Master, as the Master himself did, in terms of country life; neither the township nor the country will be the limit of his usefulness and influence.

To do this, however, he must be a man among men and not merely a Presbyterian among Presbyterians or a Baptist among Baptists. If he can not express the eternal verities of our religion in terms of rural life, he can not hope to influence the life of the farmer. If he can not, after the manner of Paul, show the countryman how the teachings of the Master apply to his eating and drinking, his buying and selling, his treatment of his wife, his children, his neighbors and his hired hands, he is falling short of the full measure of usefulness.

Country people care little about the preacher's philosophy, but they are obedient as none other to a clear: Thus saith the Lord. They live habitually in such close touch with the realities of nature, and the power of God as manifested in nature, that they can not live on negations. They will forgive much, and overlook more in a man who is in vital touch with their lives, who is among them not merely to build up the

congregation, but to develop a nobler life in the entire community.

There is the same natural relation between the forces of righteousness in the country that there is between the forces of unrighteousness in the city. In the latter the saloon, the brothel and the gambling den always go together. The country church, the country school, the extension work of the agricultural college and the country work of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association are the things that make for righteousness in the country and country town, and should always cooperate.

The leader at the rural social center, whether that be a school or a church, will combine these forces. The pastor can more readily be the leader and persuade the teacher in the rural school to teach arithmetic in terms of the farm instead of the bank or customs house; the botany of the fields instead of the botany of the books; local geography as well as that of distant lands. He will welcome to his church on a proper day the lecturer who brings the college to the farm. He will through the boys and girls of his church and Sabbath School reach out to the boys and girls of the unchurched. If the boys play baseball on Sunday instead of going to church, it will largely be his fault. If he were equal to his job, he would persuade the parents of the boys that they will do more work in five and a half days, with country play on Saturday afternoons,

than in six days without play. The boys will gladly go to hear a man preach who can do them that service.

The Men and Religion work in the country is essentially the same as that in the city. In both there will be the community ideal and the fundamental doctrine of human brotherhood. The social service in the country is to take care of the man on the edge, who is liable to fail through sickness or misfortune, or likely to yield to temptation. The boys' work is to see that the boys have wholesome play that leads to cleanness of life, to that efficiency which goes with team work, and an opportunity for development in school and church. The community service is that of developing a class consciousness binding the country people together, and in both town and country evangelism and the missionary spirit. For we serve ourselves best by conscious and continuous effort to serve others. The church that gives freely for missions will give freely to its own support, and vice versa.

In both country and city we have the bane of a narrow sectarianism. Narrow is the proper word. Denominations we must have and ought to have, for men differ in tastes and points of view; but they should be cooperative instead of competitive, and will be so when we see clearly that the work of the denomination is primarily to save souls and develop splendid human beings. When denominations and

preachers in the country and country towns see clearly that their primary work is to save souls, and to train them for right living here as well as hereafter, they will see that, speaking generally, the country is not over-churched. Here and there it is; but when a community understands that the pastor is their friend and helper, that he stands for all that is best in their lives, he will not lack an audience, nor will he have need to complain of lack of financial support.

"I am not a member of the church," said a farmer at a corn judging school the other day; "but if you will send a man to my township who will preach that sort of gospel, I will pay a hundred dollars a year and my father will pay another hundred."

The financial support given the rural minister is as a rule shamefully small; but there are two reasons for this: First, the community does not regard the service of the pastor as a community service, and he feels that the congregation and not the community should support him. The congregations as a rule have not realized that the pastor's salary should be increased proportionately to the increase in the price of farm products and farm labor. They do know, however, that if they are to have efficiency in a team of horses, they must keep them in good heart by kindness and must feed them without regard to the price of grain. They are not broad enough yet to see that if they are to

have efficiency in a pastor, he must be kept in good heart by kindness and freedom from worldly anxiety. They really mean well; they simply do not think. Genuine, but tight-wad, saints are they, rich in "saving grace" but undeveloped in the grace of giving.

We have now pointed out the necessity for the extension of the Men and Religion Movement to the open country, if the results of the Movement in the city is to be permanent. We have pointed out the necessity for a Christian rural civilization, if any civilization worth while is to survive in the city. We have touched on the woeful lack of organization and leadership in the open country, the townward and cityward look of country preachers, country teachers, retired farmers, and the boys and girls reared in the open country. We have sketched briefly the economic forces that have led to this disorganization, and have suggested in broad outline the remedy, namely, cooperative church work among the denominations, instead of competitive, making the saving of souls and character building the main objects, and the most efficient means of increasing church membership; the development of the community spirit and of social centers, preferably the rural church, but cooperating with the rural school teacher, the extension department of the agricultural college, and the country work of the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Association; and above all the preaching of

the gospel in terms of farm life; and as necessarily, through a careful study of human nature in the country. All this is merely a statement in terms of country life of the brotherhood of man, the fatherhood of God, and the efficiency of the gospel of Christ to save the man born out of the church as well as the man born in the church, the poor as well as the rich, the tenant as well as the landlord.

The question arises: Will it work? The answer is that here and there over all this broad land it is being tried; and that wherever it has been tried and in proportion as it has been applied, it has worked and will work. More than that: the revival of the country church has become necessary to the very existence of the city church. The city has never grown enough preachers to supply even half its own pulpits. Even its most influential laymen are for the most part country-born.

The time for a church-wide movement at reviving the country church is propitious. Economic forces which during the last thirty years of the last century drove the country-born to the town and city are ceasing to draw men townward and beginning to draw them countryward. The low cost of food, which built up the cities and impoverished the country, will never return. The present so-called high price of food, which is merely normal, is already checking the flow to the city and compelling city population to spread out over the country

along suburban trolley and inter-urban lines. The labor troubles, now becoming world-wide, mainly due to the normal cost of living and that largely to the wicked waste of the fertility of the Mississippi Valley, are turning the eyes of the laboring man as well as the well-to-do in this country and in Europe also, countryward.

Ever since the Country Life Commission, after having visited some thirty states, pointed out the shortcomings of the rural church and the country school, and the lack of a rural civilization satisfactory to its own boys and girls, all denominations have been waking up to the necessity of developing a higher church life and a higher civilization in the country town and the open country. The country church is waking up. Scores of country preachers are availing themselves of the aid furnished by the agricultural colleges in their summer schools for country pastors.

The main thing lacking, humanly speaking, is leadership. It must be leadership that knows the country; leadership not only spirit-born, but soil-born; not necessarily born on the soil, but akin in spirit to the man who tills the soil. We can not uplift men by standing off and saying: "Come up to me"; but by showing them in Christian humility what is best in us, we can draw out in response what is best in them.

We may have to change our methods of preaching—and we will when we get a broader vision;—and lay greater emphasis on the duties

of the citizens of the kingdom of heaven on this earth—the portal of the life to come—and follow more closely the example of Jesus when he preached to the small farmers and in the country towns of Galilee. We may have to broaden our conception of Christianity until it includes the square deal in business and a better family life; but in doing all this we shall only become more Christ-like, and develop a type of religious life which will carry its credentials with it.

We may be obliged to modify some of the teachings in the "schools of the prophets"—less theology perhaps, much more exegesis; less training in doctrinal preaching, much more in exposition; more psychology or training in human nature, and more instruction by precept and example in the best way of mixing with men of all classes. All this and much more is imperative; for this nation can not survive with 53.7 per cent of its population unorganized, hence not in touch with each other, and approximately half of them entirely outside the direct influences of the church of God.

Agriculture after forty years in the wilderness has at last in some sections come in sight of the Promised Land—a sound economic basis. To place it on a permanent basis it will be necessary to make a careful study of some distinctly rural problems; among them the problems growing out of the relation of landlord and tenant, and the problem of cooperation for

better business as well as a better social life. What the country needs, in addition to material prosperity, is opportunity for development of the intellectual life, of the social life and of the spiritual life. In all these last leadership must be taken by the country church. Given this, and the country will continue to send to the city, as it did in the first half of the nineteenth century, the most magnificent material for building up a splendid urban civilization. The alternative is: eventually a rural peasantry, "the man with the hoe," and a decadent nation.

BOOK II

SOCIAL RELIGION IN THE COUNTRY

I

THE LITERATURE OF THE CHURCH AND COUNTRY LIFE MOVEMENT

GEORGE FREDERICK WELLS

Scientific management has not yet been applied in the field of the rural * church. When the trial is made, the conservation and greatly increased efficiency of our working forces for a better rural life will unquestionably result.

On what lines can conservation, redirection and stimulation be attained? We can look nowhere else for the answer to this question than to a scientific, Christian program for the social welfare and betterment of the rural community.

On reflection one realizes that already very much has been lost to the church and country life movement by too limited attention to the literary side of the question. As great as the losses may have been on the educational, the social service, the civic and the agricultural and economic sides of the movement, we believe that they have been even greater on the religious or church sides. Enthusiastic leaders have dashed into the field to work out seemingly all

* For the sake of clearness let it be said that the standpoint of this discussion as to the definition of the term rural is that of the United States Census Bureau. The terms "rural" and "country" alike refer to political divisions outside of cities having fewer than 2500 people. When territory outside of cities, towns and village communities is distinctly referred to, it is under the term, "open country."

important plans without turning to the library to find that the same things have already been accomplished in a multitude of cases. Had greater heed been given to the matter of bibliography, also, the present literature of the subject would now be at a much higher stage. We may well expect that the writers of the future will begin where the writers of the past have left off. The time has arrived when the mere conventional covering of old ground is unwelcome. The library study of the question, therefore, is a part of the process which is finally to solve the spiritual and social problems of rural progress in America.

The framework of this study of church and country life literature will be a practical and at the same time a scientifically valid community program for country churches. For a fuller statement of this, see the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science (March, 1912, pp. 137-9) and Warren H. Wilson's leaflet, "The Country Church Program" (address its author, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York).

To classify our literature will in large part describe it. To classify and to describe, on the background of a central, living outline, will insure its investment in the field of service. To classify, describe and invest will send forth leaders who will produce a civilization on American soil, which will be abreast of the highest and best in American ideals and spirit.

I

The first, most fundamental, and most expansive item of religious work in any given community is to get there a God-worshiping group of people. Such a worship group requires two things. The first of these is a preacher of the Gospel as a religious leader. The second is a house or church in which to worship. The literature which places special emphasis upon the leadership of the Christian minister in country districts is already quite extended.

One book which treats most admirably in a general way of the problem of the supply of ministers for local leadership is John R. Mott's "The Future Leadership of the Church" ($1.00).

It may safely be said that if a country pastor can have only one book which treats especially of country community building, that book should be "The Story of John Frederic Oberlin" by Rev. Augustus Field Beard, D. D. ($1.25.) The practical importance of this book, as a demonstration of what one man by a life-long ministry accomplished under trying circumstances, cannot easily be over-estimated. It amounts to an inspiration. It would be an invaluable mission to make this book available in every non-urban parish in America.

Two other books have been published, which, though not of so great practical import, are con-

spicuous additions to the literature of leadership in rural parish work. "Some Famous Country Parishes," by Professor Ezra S. Tipple, D.D., Ph.D. ($1.50), portrays most attractively the rural origin and environment of John Fletcher, Charles Kingsley and others. "A Country Parish" by Frank Samuel Child ($1.25), is an interesting story of the "Prime Ancient Society" of which Mr. Child is now minister.

During the past few years, the country life movement, in seeking information concerning the re-direction and integration of religious and social forces, is doubtless responsible for an over emphasis. The popular call for fewer rather than for more church buildings represents, possibly, such an over emphasis. Now that we know that, in the larger part of the United States, overlooking is in excess of overlapping, and that religious vitality is more needed than less church equipment, the tide has turned. The church erection, church building and church extension work of the missionary boards has been continued with courage, though often unheeded by the more popular movement.

There is no book of outstanding service on this increasingly important phase of rural betterment. The article on Home Missions in the Encyclopedia of Missions (Funk & Wagnalls Company, New York, 1910, pp. 301-11), will give some general light upon this subject. Two articles are available upon the architecture of country churches in general. The first is, "The

Rural Church," by J. Cleveland Cady (*Outlook,* Sept. 26, Oct. 31 and Nov. 28, 1896, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York), and the other is "The Country Church in America," by William B. Bigelow (*Scribner's Magazine,* Nov., 1897).

II

A Worship Group should very soon grow into a Service Group. The second item in the program of a church concerns the duty of the members of that church to be of personal service to people outside of the church. A service group requires a program of spiritual work and teaching which, for the country church in common with all churches, consists of evangelism, religious education, pastoral and personal visitation, temperance and other moral reforms and missions.

The class of books which emphasizes individual missionary service in behalf of country community life has a few splendid examples.

The book of greatest recent interest on this phase of rural need is "The Church of the Open Country," by Rev. Warren H. Wilson, Ph. D. (50 cents). Since its publication, it has awakened many earnest persons to the possibilities of devoted work outside not only of cities, but of towns and villages as well.

"Rural Christendom," by Rev. Charles Roads, D.D. (90 cents), and "The Day of the Country Church," by Rev. J. O. Ashenhurst ($1.00 net), are most valuable supplements to stimulate to the

practice of the second stage in the growth of the country church.

The leading book thus far upon the religious phase of the country life problem is beyond question, "The Country Town" by Rev. Wilbert L. Anderson, D.D. ($1.00). This book interprets the problem in both a deeper and a broader spirit than any other. It is not mentioned at the head of the present division because it is more a scientific survey and argument than a missionary appeal. President Kenyon L. Butterfield's "The Country Church and the Rural Problem" ($1.00), unexcelled in clearness and sympathy, occupies medium ground as to both content and mission, between the books by Anderson and Wilson. Which of these books should one first read and study, it may be asked. The close student of the problem should first read Anderson, the average working pastor might well read Butterfield, and the Christian worker in the church should give first attention to Wilson.

III

The third fundamental step for the country church is to lead those who worship God and personally serve their fellow-men to realize fellowship or federation with other like groups if they exist in the same community.

In the same way that it is impossible for a child to do the work of a man simply because he is not large and strong enough, it is often impossible for one church to work with a neigh-

bor church on the federal or level plan. Where two or more churches in a community have likeness in their stages of development, they may enter a Fellowship Group by forming what are called maximum service church federations, one-minister federations of churches, or inter-church associations. In some instances, with two or more adjoining congregations, it may be decided that the best thing is to form one church and congregation, to be affiliated with a single denomination.

The literature on the subject of the practical federation of country churches is very limited. There are no books which treat especially of the subject. Pamphlet literature may be obtained by addressing the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, at 215 Fourth Avenue, New York; and Rev. E. Tallmadge Root, Field Secretary of the Massachusetts and Rhode Island Federations of Churches, 53 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

The following publications are of leading value upon this important problem of country churches:—"What is Church Federation?" in the *Homiletic Review* for June, 1911 (35 cents), "A Study in Local Church Federation" (40 cents), and "One-Minister Federations of Country Churches" (30 cents for the series).

IV

A church through fulfilling its life as a Worship Group, a Service Group and a Fellowship

Group may thereby develop to the point of ability to cooperate as an organization with other organizations in the same community.

The church as a member of a Cooperative Group will promote or inspire the improvement of schools and their consolidation where necessary; the improvement of the Grange and other organizations which encourage better farming; and the improvement of organizations for public recreation.

The second and the fourth items of the country church program mark very different kinds of activity. The spirit of the Service Group church is that of personal service. The spirit of the Cooperative Group church is that of cooperation between organizations as such.

The book with which we are most familiar on this phase of the subject is "Chapters in Rural Progress," by President Kenyon L. Butterfield ($1.00 net). This book treats of the farmers' institute, the Grange, and the farmers' school, on a level with the farmers' church. This level plan marks this entire class of literature. It is the literature of the federation of rural social forces.

The book of the broadest, most statesmanlike and yet of the most sympathetic and penetrating spirit is Sir Horace Plunkett's "The Rural Life Problem of the United States" ($1.25).

Four publications of conspicuous value belong to the literature of the country church in cooperation. The Report of the Country Life

Commission, Senate Document No. 705 of the United States Government, is the best known of these (75 cents net). The fourth volume of The Cyclopedia of American Agriculture ($20.00 net) discusses the whole range of country life organizations and principles in a most interesting and practical manner. "Country Life," the March, 1912, number of the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science ($1.00) is a most useful and handy volume. The only periodical of national scope which touches the field of the church and country life in a standard manner is "Rural Manhood," the keynote of which is cooperation (County Work Department, Y. M. C. A. 124 East 28th Street, New York, $1.00 per year). Three books by Dean L. H. Bailey, "The State and the Farmer," "The Country Life Movement" and "The Outlook to Nature" ($1.25 each) have the point of view of rural social cooperation.

V

There is yet a harder task for the country church. It often happens in the country, as in the city, that home life, school life, civic life, and industrial or commercial life, do not adequately provide needed human privileges. In such cases, the church must make of itself a home, a school, a civic institution, or an industrial or commercial agency. At any cost, it must secure provision for public health, wholesome living conditions,

and the care of dependents, defectives, and delinquents. By thus substituting, it enters into the relations of the Substitutional Group. The church as a substitutional group does institutional church work.

The literature on this phase of work is very meager. Rev. Charles E. Mayward's "Institutional Work for the Country Church" (50 cents), conveys much of the point of view and method of institutional work. "Institutional Church Work in Rural Sections," by the Rev. Jonas Inman (10 cents) is an enlightening article.

There are two further stages of development which it is the privilege of country churches to strive for. There are, therefore, two more items in a community program for rural churches.

VI

Each and every church in a rural community should become a vital part of the entire community. A church fulfils its community relation and social duty when it reflects the religious and moral aspect of the whole community. No church is fully a community church until its life becomes the religious life of the whole Community Group.

VII

The country church may become vitally related to church and society everywhere. The church which both gives and receives from so-

cial forces external to the community, thereby enters the World Group. It thus realizes its place in the Christian Kingdom.

Such, today, is the many-sided, but infinite possibility and problem of country churches, viewed in the light of a new perspective.

Many active and growing rural churches practice these advanced stages of work in some or most of their aspects. The whole literature of the rural problem has the spirit and ideal of just such standards. We cannot now, although we will sometime, be able to point to specific literary treatment of all these aspects of work.

There are, however, two classes of writings which emphasize country church work related to community groups and world groups. The first is the literature of the survey idea in country life. The second is the literature of country church demonstration.

SOCIAL SURVEY LITERATURE

We desire to study the rural church in all its relations. We need, therefore, to know in which one or more of the group stages any given church is functioning. Therefore, the social survey literature.

Professor L. H. Bailey's "The Survey-Idea in Country-Life Work," though it emphasizes more the agricultural than the social side of the subject, is a timely instruction to rural investigation (Pamphlet, 19 pp. Address the author at Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.).

The Department of Church and Country Life of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions has recently published four valuable reports of rural surveys in Pennsylvania, Indiana, Missouri and Illinois. They are the beginning of a series of illustrated reports of actual conditions, which may be secured by addressing the Department at 156 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Three handbook guides to the making of surveys in rural and village communities by pastors, classes of students or by social experts are available. The first is "A Social Survey for Rural Communities" (ten cents per copy). "A Method of Making a Social Survey of a Rural Community," by Rev. C. J. Galpin, is an interesting treatment of the same subject from a different angle (Circular of Information No. 29, January, 1912, 11 pp., the University of Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station, Madison, Wis.). "A Social Service Program for the Parish" by Rev. F. M. Crouch presents a scheme which will interest still others. (Pamphlet of the Joint Commission on Social Service of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 24 pp. It may be had upon request of the author, 157 Montague Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.).

THE COUNTRY CHURCH DEMONSTRATION

The most useful literature today on the country church is that which reports actual work and results. "The Story of John Frederic

Oberlin" by Beard has been the pioneer of this class of studies. "Quaker Hill, A Sociological Study," by Rev. Warren H. Wilson ($1.10), has had some influence. The best known demonstration story of this class is that by Rev. Matthew Brown McNutt, pastor of Du Page Presbyterian Church, Plainfield, Ill., "Ten Years in a Country Church" (25 cents). "How a Country Church Found Itself" by Rev. C. O. Bemies (*World's Work*, Aug., 1911) is a similar interesting portrayal.*

* This review of church and country life literature would be incomplete without some reference to available bibliographic lists upon the subject, "Writings on Practical Country Church Problems" (Homiletic Review for Aug. 1909) is a somewhat exhaustive list of publications up to that date. "A Selected Bibliography on the Country Church Problem," a pamphlet by the New England Country Church Association, is another good beginning (8 pp., Sept. 1909. Address Prof. H. K. Rowe, Newton Center, Mass.). In November, 1910, the Gospel of the Kingdom (Bible House, New York) published "A Selected Bibliography of the Country Church Problem."

NOTE: The books in the foregoing list may be obtained at prices noted by addressing ASSOCIATION PRESS, 124 East 28th Street, New York.

II

THE COUNTRY MINISTER

G. Walter Fiske

The country minister is the minister of the church that serves the working farmer. The term has not so very much to do with the census, for there are country ministers in many a good-sized village as well as in the open country; and unfortunately most of the preachers serving the churches in the open country live in towns and villages instead of with their people.

There is no denying the fact, that with the growing city dominating our civilization, the country minister has not been envied, or his post coveted; except perhaps by men unequal to his task. Too frequently it has been a mere stepping-stone to a city pastorate instead of a stopping place for a genuine life work.

But with the coming of the Rural Life Movement and a broadening opportunity for the country church, the title *country minister* is becoming once more a title of honor; just as the term country gentleman is again coming to its own. A new rural civilization is gradually winning its way in the country. It is blessing the country with many comforts and social privileges. A new economic prosperity follows in

its wake. Rural life is here and there becoming the envy of the "cliff-dwellers" in the cities. And even rural discontent vanishes before the smile of dollar wheat. Gradually but surely rural life is being redirected and readjusted to the new conditions, and this promises a brighter day for the country church. It rests largely with the church to make the promise good.

This means a new opportunity for the right sort of country minister. It is an opportunity sufficient to claim the whole life service of big men. In fact the task of successful readjustment is too difficult for any but strong men. Broken down ministers who have failed in the city must not look to the country parsonage today as a refuge from toil or a temporary harbor for repairs. The insistent needs of the Kingdom of God in rural districts today demand strong, efficient men, specifically trained for country service, lovers of the country life, and thoroughly acquainted with country people and their needs.

SOME PERSONAL REASONS FOR FAILURE

It is not the function of this chapter to discuss broadly the country church problem. But the personal relation of the minister to that problem it is necessary for us to consider; for it is altogether too true in most country churches that success or failure depends upon the minister. In saying this, however, we do not relieve a decadent Church of the responsibility for its own failures. The pattern largely deter-

mines the product, and the country minister is usually just as large a man as the rural church has allowed him to become.

In many instances we find that country church decline is the fault of the pastor. Very often he does not live with his people but in a town several miles away. This results in making the minister a town man rather than a country man and social differences combine with distance to make successful cooperation doubly difficult. This also tends to turn the minister into a mere preacher, when what the country churches need most is a pastor;—not a gossip-monger but a strong friendly man who lives the gospel right among his people.

More fundamental than this is the minister's lack of preparation. In the great majority of cases the country pastor is an untrained man trying to do a skilled laborer's task;—or more accurately, he is a professional man with little or no professional training. We expect little legal wisdom or success from untrained lawyers. We consult poorly trained doctors only for "light cases." Even our school boards in countless places are insisting that teachers must have a professional training in normal schools. But three-fourths of the country ministers, when all denominations are considered, have practically no preparation for their profession except what they have "picked up" by themselves. An under-trained profession is necessarily an under-paid profession. Well trained ministers usually receive

a living wage. The bulk of country ministers except in a few denominations are neither well trained nor respectably paid. It takes a personality of real strength, and fitted by a complete course of study, to develop a country church into a financially capable, as well as spiritually effective, institution.

The country church today with its broadening responsibilities requires the leadership of ministers of thorough preparation and high ideals.

IDEALS OF THE COUNTRY MINISTER

With constantly rising standards in all prosperous rural communities, there should be a parallel rise in the ideals of the ministers. The lazy, seedy dominie, contented with marking time, and confining his energies merely to running his meager church machinery, is only a petty sort of parish priest. The narrow-hearted ecclesiastic, bent solely on building up his little church at the community's expense is a tame sort of social vampire. It is the broad-gauged man, counting himself not merely the hired man of his little church, but the minister of the Kingdom of God, who really serves his community. It is thus he magnifies his office, by forgetting it in service; and through unselfish service becomes the recognized "person," the real leader of the community life, if he stays there long enough to become universally loved and respected.

To attain this success, the country minister must have *broad ideals of the Church's mission.* Two things keep many strong men out of the rural ministry today: A divided over-churched field and a narrow opportunity. That is, narrow sectarianism resulting in limiting a man's chance to a fraction of a community (and therefore a meager salary) and a narrow conception of the Church's function. But strong men are able to develop a broad community usefulness for the Church. The pastor who merely tries to save the souls of his little flock and diplomatically "get them into heaven" has missed the true conception of the Church's function. The whole man must be redeemed, in body, mind and spirit. There has been too much superficial "soul-saving" which has left the pocket book unconsecrated, the mind still fettered by tradition, the body still enslaved by appetite and the social conscience unaroused by the call for brotherhood.

If there is any sort of human need or community weakness in the place, it is the Church's duty, as the vicar of the Christ who went about doing good, to see to it that that need is met in some adequate fashion. The Church will usually do this indirectly by inspiring other agencies or individuals, but somehow it must fill the gaps in the social structure and either do the needed work or get it done.

It will be necessary to make at once a thorough sociological survey of the field, to discover what

its needs are, and what the human resources are which may be utilized to meet the needs. The details will work out differently in every field and will vary greatly with every passing year. The main thing is to see the vision of the Church's broad opportunity as the divinely appointed guardian of humanity in the community, a responsibility which cannot be limited to the issues of the next world, and may not be postponed or avoided, but must be met, in order to make *this world* a decent world to live in, and our rural corner of it a comfortable and respectable place for character to grow.

THE MINISTER'S IDEALS OF COOPERATION

The larger vision of his mission will force the country minister out of the petty jealous attitude of mind which regards every other social institution as in competition with his church. The burden of his task, to save his community and annex it to the Kingdom of God here and now, will so weigh upon him that he will gladly welcome two things: the most cordial federation with all other Christian churches in his township; and cooperation with every agency which is in any way bettering the life of the people.

This will involve on the one hand a church federation with all churches in the township, and also in the country, for planning a country-wide campaign for righteousness, and conserving all religious interests on the community basis.

It will involve not only occasional union services of worship but perhaps quarterly conferences to plan for the welfare of the community and to organize cooperative work for the season. Churches unwilling to meet this test are magnifying sectarianism at the expense of the Kingdom of God. The minister should be loyal to his denomination, but the welfare of his community as part of the Kingdom of Heaven has prior claim upon him.

The country minister with right ideals will also cooperate with all other agencies for rural welfare: the local schools and library, the Grange and such other fraternal organizations as are really serving the community rather than acting as social parasites; the village improvement society, the nearest hospital, the township trustees or "overseers of the poor," the farmers' institutes and cooperative societies, the nearest agricultural college, and particularly the rural Young Men's Christian Association, if organized in his county. When the last of these is well conducted it probably has the best leverage of all social forces for uniting the churches in country sections today.

IDEALS OF PERSONAL EFFICIENCY

The country minister must have higher ideals of personal efficiency and thoroughness. The problem of the rural church will never be solved until we have stronger personalities in the rural

pulpits and parsonages. It is a question of leadership, ultimately. Give us big enough men and the difficulties will quickly vanish. A modest country minister said to me not long ago, "I've never been in a church yet, but where, if I'd been a big enough man, I could have solved the problem."

Another man, "loafing on his job," who remarked that he "hoped he would some day have an opportunity big enough really to test his powers" is never likely to succeed. He is losing his great life chance by neglecting present opportunities.

The country churches must not expect much stronger leaders until they pay living salaries which will make it possible for the strongest men to rear cultured families in the country parishes. But the men now in the field can grow to be larger men, *if they will.* The growth of personality is the hardest task in life; but with God all things are possible. Let in God's spirit and a small soul simply has to grow. The prescription for a growing life of leadership is this: Let the spirit of the living God into your life; then your personality will continuously outgrow itself. Thus has all high leadership been developed and effectually maintained, from the days of Moses to the present.

Let the country minister raise his own ideals of *personal efficiency.* Let him not be satisfied with himself, though his people flatter him enough to turn his head. Let him insist on

scholarly habits of life, regular study hours, persistent, vigorous work at his books.

The lack of books need not prevent this: colleges, theological seminaries, state and city libraries will meet a man more than half-way, if he is really hungry for books. Poverty may prevent the country minister's owning many books,—and some have practically no books at all,—but nothing need prevent his reading the best literature except his own lack of the scholar's ambition. The traveling library is here to stay. No American minister needs to "go dry on brains" for lack of books.

The danger of mental stagnation is one of the most serious dangers the rural ministers face. But it can be conquered. A persistent habit of scholarly life will greatly help. Keeping in touch with the nearest libraries will keep up the supply of the best books, though the pocket book may fail. And the incentive for study can be gained by comradeship with the best minds in the parish and in the country. Rural ministers should be more helpful to each other here. Let them plan courses of study together and meet in small groups once in two weeks for conference and discussion. Let them secure the help of agricultural college extension privileges. In all possible ways let them keep in touch with the thinking world and they will keep their own thought vital. They will thus become, as they should become, leaders of thought, as well as life, in their community.

One element in the minister's efficiency is his democratic mixing with country folks. The smaller the minister's personality, the more he seems to delight in being called, *"The Reverend Brown,"* or even *"Reverend"* for short. Not only is this stamp of professionalism a serious hindrance to the man's influence, but it is also ungrammatical. The term *reverend* is only a prefix; it is not a title. The word reverend is not a noun. It has never been anything but an adjective. In some sections this abuse of the English language is very common.

Two other matters of policy and method are serious enough to require attention in this crowded chapter: the dependence on revivalism and the habit of sectarian preaching. The rural sections need genuine evangelism, the gospel of righteousness, and of personal and social redemption, preached in every church and schoolhouse of the land. But superficial, emotional revivals have for generations been the curse of the rural church. Dependence upon the annual revival to keep the church alive is as unnatural as dependence on any other stimulant. Most of us have learned to shun stimulants, the after effects are too awful. Let the country pastor be his own evangelist most of the time, and follow up and prepare for his work of spiritual harvesting with a continuous program of thorough religious education and spiritual culture.

In the northeastern part of the country sectarian preaching of the old fashioned sort is

seldom indulged in, but in many other sections it seems to be still the stock in trade of many rural pulpits. Divisive sectarianism always postpones the Kingdom of God. It is peculiarly bad in the country, where Christian unity is so necessary. It is a sin at least, in the city; but it is a crime in the country. At best it is a city luxury which the rural sections cannot afford.

Let nothing said herein be construed as unfriendly criticism of the man who is faithfully bearing the heaviest, loneliest burdens of the Church, the country minister. He deserves praise, patience and appreciation. But he needs to enlarge his own capacity for effective service by seeing broader visions and discovering larger ideals of efficiency. He should not always be blamed for his failures. Too often he is called to his church with the cheerful hope that he will accomplish the impossible, in spite of inherited difficulties of long standing. And if he fails to crowd the church, fill the contribution box and make people love each other who are determined not to, then he may be pronounced unsuccessful and is allowed to move on in disappointment.

Rather let him stay by his task five years instead of one and he will compel success. Continuity of leadership of the right sort solves the rural problem. And let us have more leaders of the right sort, college men with the vision of rural opportunity, who hear ringing in their ears

the call of the country for men who love country folks. For such men there is a difficult life mission today, with plenty of "the moral equivalent of war," but a chance to invest their lives as community builders like Johann Friedrick Oberlin.

III

THE MINISTER'S USE OF THE SURVEY

E. Fred Eastman

A survey of a community is a scientific study of the forces and conditions that are affecting the lives of the people who live within its bounds. It is a study of all such forces and conditions—economic, industrial, social, educational, moral, vital and religious. It is the scientific rather than the doctrinal approach to the work of improvement.

Why make such a study? Better ask, how work efficiently without it? For how improve until we know just what needs improvement? How remedy until we make a diagnosis? The modern minister is not content with treating symptoms; he wants to get at causes. He wants to find what the forces in his community are that work against the Kingdom of God.

But the forces are not always apparent. For example, the churches of a certain community are bemoaning the fact that they are losing ground, that their membership is dwindling and that interest in religious matters is a thing of the past. The modern minister is not content with assigning such causes as "Worldliness," "Love of Money," "Cooling of the Heart," "Grip of Sin," etc., to this state of affairs. He knows that such

phrases are descriptions of symptoms, not causes, and that the trouble lies deeper. He undertakes a survey, and he makes these discoveries (I take an actual instance):

In the last ten years the price of farm land in his community has increased over one hundred per cent, doubling the farmer's *capital*. But the farmer's *income* has not increased. The five thousand dollar farm that yielded an income of five hundred dollars ten years ago still yields the same income although the value of the farm has gone to ten thousand dollars. The interest on the farmer's investment is therefore but five per cent to-day, where it was ten per cent ten years ago. This condition has naturally given rise to the tendency to sell, to convert the capital into cash and put it where it will bring a larger interest. Many farmers have followed this tendency, have sold their farms and moved away. When they have moved, of course, they have gone out of the church. The population has become a shifting population. Community spirit has died—witnessed by the passing of community recreation, the old husking bees, quilting bees, barn raisings, etc. The minister discovers not only that his population has become shifting and that social life has become stagnant; he finds that morals are suffering. The rise in the price of land has raised the age of marriage, with an inevitably harmful effect upon the sexual cleanliness of the young people of the community. Ten years ago when land was twenty dol-

lars an acre, a young man could afford to buy a patch of forty acres or more by the time he was twenty-two or twenty-three years old. He could afford then to get married, to "set up for himself" at that age. But to-day land is forty dollars an acre, and the young man must save longer. He is now twenty-five or twenty-six before he can "set up for himself" and his girl's age is proportionately greater. In other words, the period between the birth of the young people's social instincts and their marriage—the temptation period—has been lengthened. Is it any wonder that the number of young people who can keep themselves clean through a temptation period of, say, eight years, is less than the number who can keep themselves clean through a period of five years?

The minister goes back to his pulpit realizing that the religious decadence of his community has had economic causes. Economic causes need economic remedies—not theological. He can preach to his people now out of an understanding of their problems and a sympathy with their struggles. He can shape his gospel to meet their needs. This is but one example of what his survey discovers. It brings to light forces that work in silence but produce effects of mighty consequence. It shows relationships that were not guessed; it shows possibilities for service that were undreamed of.

How make such a study? It is a simple thing, more simple by far than it may appear on paper.

Let us consider first the ground the survey covers, and second, the way to get the facts.

First, the ground to be covered.

1. BOUNDARIES, MAPS, ETC. Prepare seven outline maps of the community, one for each of the following sections: economic conditions, population, transportation and communication, recreation and morals, education, religious activities, and social welfare. The boundaries of the community will really be difficult to determine. In general they will be measured by a day's team haul radius from the community center. It is often convenient for purposes of using statistics already collected by the government to use the township (or in the South the election district) as the basis of the survey. Just what the boundaries of the community shall be, should be determined, however, by the common sense of the men who are to make the study rather than by any general rule laid down by an outsider. These outline maps should contain simply the roads, the schools, the churches, markets and the important features of the topography.

2. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS. The following data should be collected under this head: the natural resources, mineral and vegetable, the amount and sources of the farmer's income, a description of the quantity and character of farm tenantry and farm labor, an account of the quantity and kind of specialized farming, an outline of the methods of farming including a description of the rotation of crops commonly em-

ployed, the use of commercial fertilizer, the care of farm machinery, the amount of artificial drainage and the general effects of the prevailing method of farming upon the fertility of the soil. All these things should be studied in relation to their status ten years ago to show increase or decrease, progress or decadence. Under this head also should come a brief study of the markets and the transportation agencies employed in marketing and whatever cooperative undertakings there are for selling or producing.

3. Population. After finding the present number of inhabitants of the community, find out what changes have taken place in this population during the past ten years, what increases or decreases, and their causes. In case families have moved out, find where they have gone. If families have moved in, find where they came from. Make a short classification of the population by industrial types, that is, the number of farm owners, farm tenants, farm hands, mechanics, merchants, clerks, miners and professional men.

4. Transportation and Communication. Find the number of miles of macadamized, gravel, and dirt roads, of railroads and of trolleys. Find out the cost per mile of building and of maintenance of each of these. Then make a study of the way public opinion is being formed. Find where men meet, when they meet, how many of them meet and who are the moving spirits among them. Describe the social cen-

ters. Describe the effect of the introduction of the telephone upon the social life. Find out the number of societies, secret and open, the membership of each, the average attendance and just what they contribute to the social life of the community.

5. Recreation and Morals. Find out how how many of the following recreations are in vogue in the community, together with the number taking part in each and the character and purpose of the performance: baseball, bowling, basketball, football, dances, moving picture shows, pool and billiards (rooms), theaters, lecture courses, home talent plays, indoor gymnastics, tennis, golf, cards, picnics, socials and fairs. It is very important to find what agency provides these recreations—church, school, saloon, lodge, societies or some unorganized agency. The question of morals is a ticklish one and should be handled with care. The moral conditions among the unmarried should be described. The average age of marriage together with the fluctuations in this age during the last ten years should be determined. The number of saloons and blind tigers in the community together with quantity and character of their patronage should be found and careful estimates prepared of the material cost of these institutions. If the community has any centers of special moral infection they should be studied the same way.

6. Rural Education. The following data

should be secured for each school: (a) Material equipment, including the number of rooms, the dimensions of each, the decorations, character of the desks, the lighting (whether from one side or from two or more sides), the heating, the presence or absence of globes, maps, charts and musical instruments, the nature of the water supply, the location and condition of the toilet, the size, beautification and equipment for play of the grounds. (b) The teaching force, including the number of teachers, male and female, their qualifications (academic training, diploma held and grade of certificate) their salary as compared with previous years and with other schools, and their tenure. (c) Pupils. The enumeration of the district compared with its enrollment and both compared with its average attendance. The character and purpose of the organization in the student body should be determined and the general sentiment of the pupils concerning the school. (d) Studies. Find out to what extent the following studies are taught: Nature Study, Elementary Agriculture, Domestic Science, Manual Training, Music and Drawing. Note the length of the year's session in days and the number of recitations each teacher has per day. (e) Library. Find the number of volumes, their value, the amount spent during the last year, the character of the selection and the proportion of pupils that use the books. (f) The school as a social center. Find the number of entertainments given in a year, their character and to what extent attended

by the school patrons. Determine for what other purposes the school building might be used for community betterment. (g) Miscellaneous. Find out how much the school actually costs, where the money comes from and how it is spent. If it is a one-room school, find out if consolidation with other schools would be practicable.

7. Religious Conditions and Activities. Locate each church upon the map and then obtain the following information concerning it: value and equipment, membership and attendance (note increase or decrease during the last ten years), size and character of the Sunday-school, how graded, how taught and how supported. Describe each organization in the congregation in reference to purpose, membership, number of meetings per year and the service rendered by it. Find the church budget and see how its money comes and how it goes. Describe as impersonally as possible the minister, in regard to his preparation, education, salary, family and his previous charges. Learn from what class of the population the church is drawing its membership. That is, is it reaching only the prosperous, the farm owners, or does its service extend to the tenant farmers and the hired hands? When each church has been studied, get this general information for the whole community: what proportion are members of any church, how much cooperation exists between the various denominations; what is the general sentiment of the community toward religion in

general; number of abandoned churches, and what practical service the churches in general are rendering to the community.

8. Social Welfare. Describe the housing conditions of the community in regard to the average number of rooms, the sanitation, the interior and exterior decorations, and the labor saving devices for women. Lastly, obtain from the Board of Health or the physicians of the community if there is no Board of Health, the vital statistics within the last few years,—birth rate, death rate and the number who have died from preventable diseases.

Second, the way to get the facts. From what sources will the minister get these facts? From the following:

(a) From public records. Much material can be had at the County Court House in the public records of the County Clerk (for marriage licenses, etc.), Treasurer, Assessor, Surveyor, Commissioners (if there are any), Recorder and Superintendent of Schools. Many counties have a Board of Health which is glad to furnish vital statistics. The Bureau of the Census, Washington, D. C., has for free distribution two bulletins on every state, one on Agriculture and one on Population. These contain invaluable data if the community boundaries correspond with the minor civil division, which is the basis of the Census Reports. The published reports of various denominational bodies, Associations, Presbyteries, Conferences, etc., are also available for church statistics.

(b) From interviews. Choose a dozen well informed representative men and women in the community, and interview them regarding the various sections. If a house-to-house canvass is practicable, so much the better, but it is not necessary. A dozen answers to the same list of questions from as many different parts of the community give fairly accurate results. Each answer will have eleven checks upon it. It should be emphasized that the people to be interviewed should be representative, not simply the best known or the wealthiest. They should include farm owners, tenants, real estate men, merchants, professional men, teachers and young people as yet unlabeled in regard to calling. It should be remembered, too, that the minister is going after facts, not opinions. He will find it advantageous to be equipped with letters of introduction from well known public men, a state official or two as well as local men. Of course every minister, teacher and official in societies and clubs should be seen in person to obtain the official data of the organization which each represents.

Let the minister use his outline map for the different sections in whatever way seems best. It is a good opportunity for developing undiscovered genius.*

* In case it is impossible for the minister to make the survey personally, the writer suggests the agency of fourteen men in the congregation who can be counted upon for three hours a week for a month or so. Separate the men into seven teams of two each. Assign one team the study of Economic Conditions, another, Population, a third, Transportation and Communication, a fourth, Recreations and Morals, etc. Then proceed as above.

When the work of collecting data is completed, prepare a report. If the minister has not found what the community needs; if he is not able to say without hesitation and without doubt, "Here is where our efforts must be applied, and here, and here," he has not done his work well. If he has failed to see the connection of the respective sections while doing the field work, he cannot fail to see it now. He will find that all have been parts of the great whole; that the conditions found under one section of the study are but the natural results of certain causes uncovered in another. The combined report will form a Book of the Community, such a book as it has never had before. Now let him prepare recommendations.

When these are ready it is time for Conservation Day. Advertise that day. It is the day on which the community will learn of what stuff it is made, and what its needs and possibilities are. Bring as many of the community into the meeting as the church will hold. Let each team present its report and its recommendations in plain, straightforward English. With the knowledge of the facts before it, with a man prepared to lead it, the church is ready to shape a program for its service to the community. It is ready to do battle for the Lord.

IV

COOPERATION AND THE STRUGGLE OF MAKING A LIVING

J. L. Coulter

The hardest struggle of the human race is the struggle to preserve life. During the earlier centuries, human being in groups protected themselves against attacking parties, and here we have an illustration of the struggle for preservation of human life that was true cooperation. The purpose was mutual defense, or mutual offense, whenever necessary. During the hunting and fishing stages, men cooperated in their effort to find a living. During the long centuries after people took up agriculture and the care of flocks and herds, men cooperated. They formed village communities, or clans, or tribes, or in some way showed that they believed it was best to work together in their effort to make a living. In time of war they cooperated with each other in attacking the enemy and in time of peace they likewise cooperated in their struggle with Nature in her many forms. The first real break of large dimension from the usual accepted form of organization came with the establishment of farms owned and operated as separate units. The family became a unit, distinct from the clan, the tribe, or the community. Of course

there was some division of labor (which may be called cooperation), among the members of the family, but this is a very secondary form and is not to be compared with the true cooperative spirit not based upon family love and affection. With the establishment of thousands, and finally of millions of individual farms, a new, great and powerful characteristic was developed and has continued to develop in many sections of the world. This is individualism, and the determination to struggle without cooperation with one's fellow men.

But the cooperative spirit never entirely disappeared. It could not and it cannot now be destroyed. Even at the present time, cooperation is absolutely necessary for the purpose of maintaining government. Here we have political cooperation. It displays itself in the election of representatives to carry on the government. It is omnipresent in some form in all political activities. This cooperative spirit is necessary and is constantly present whenever the thought of war or the need for protection arises. Where we have a squad of men, or a company, or a battalion, or a regiment, organization and cooperation are absolutely necessary, and all men recognize this fact.

Man is a gregarious animal. It is the exceptional man who is an anarchist in politics, a miser in economics, or a social recluse. Men like to talk together, to eat together, to sing together, to commune with each other in various

ways, and therefore for social purposes men have cooperated and will continue to do so.

The desire of people to get together, and indeed the absolute necessity for getting together, is as well shown when we consider the playing of children as in any other case. Practically no game can be played without the cooperation of two or more children. The base ball game and the foot ball game would be impossibilities. Without cooperation we would have to be satisfied with the individual child playing with a doll or a rattle. What is said of play is equally true of social activities generally. The choir, the music hall, the theater,—all are based upon cooperation, and unless there is perfect cooperation there cannot be true harmony. But these activities receive the attention of people only as children and during an occasional evening or afternoon during later life. The spirit of cooperation, however, is thoroughly developed among the small boys and girls. If we desire to encourage and develop cooperation in later life, it is fundamental that games and songs and organizations of boys and girls for other purposes should be fostered during their younger years.

But these activities are not so closely related to the struggle of making a living as are many other activities of the farming class. As we pass along, we find the need for cooperation reduced more and more until we reach the point where we find the farmer thoroughly convinced

that cooperation is entirely unnecessary. In contrast we find other business men who live in cities, towns and villages organizing for every conceivable purpose,—bankers, lawyers, merchants, doctors, teamsters, laborers,—all organize.

Farmers willingly cooperate in the construction of roads. This includes the building of bridges, the digging of ditches, the clearing of paths through the forest. But after they have prepared such a road as is absolutely necessary, the need for further cooperation is not as powerful, and it is more difficult to secure cooperation in the perfecting of the road than in the original laying of the highway. On the frontier, in the absence of trained carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers, lathers, plumbers, and others of this class, farmers have been in the past and are at the present time, driven to cooperation in the building of their homes. Children are unable to work, the mother of the family can do little, the father is helpless alone. Several neighbors will get together and each assist the others from time to time in the completion of their buildings. This kind of cooperation was more necessary in the past than it is at the present time. Because of the absence of the necessity, this homely old way of rendering assistance to a neighbor has more or less disappeared.

The struggle for a living best displays itself (in agriculture) in the herding of flocks and in the cultivation of the soil. Here cooperation

was necessary in the earlier days to protect the flocks from wild animals and thieves. With the perfection of political cooperation, this organization for economic protection was less necessary and gradually disappeared. Fences were built and officers of the law were selected to maintain the peace and to protect the property. At the present time in many communities there is such close cooperation among the people that rules of groups of farmers are constructed into laws that dogs shall not run at large because they endanger the lives of the smaller domestic animals on the farms. This is a sample of political cooperation with great economic significance.

Thousands of illustrations of this kind of cooperation could be cited. Suffice it to say that whenever enough members of a community agree upon some step which will be to the mutual advantage of the community, effort is made to secure through political cooperation a law carrying into effect the desire of the majority. If, however, it is not necessary for all to agree to the law, and whenever a majority cannot be secured, it is common for a voluntary association to be organized. In this case, only those who become members put into effect the desire which prompted the organization. This is special cooperation and not universal cooperation in which the majority plan for all.

Under the system of conducting agriculture at the present time in the United States, the in-

dividual farm unit predominates. There are very few farms operated by communities. There are many large farms operated by hired laborers, and many large plantations operated by many tenants, but this is not true cooperation. We have division of labor to be sure, but not mutual cooperation. The individual farmer owns such live stock as he has on his farm. He owns such implements and machinery as he has. With his domesticated animals attached to his machines he cultivates the soil of which he has charge.

In some sections of the country, however, cooperation is necessary, and in all parts of the country it is desirable in agricultural production. In sections where there is not enough water or where there is too much water, cooperation is almost absolutely necessary to dig ditches for carrying off the surplus and to provide irrigation facilities for carrying on sufficient water. In all parts of the country, cooperation is desirable. Groups of farmers should own in common valued animals to head their herds, and more expensive machines and implements such as road machines and many large field machines. Likewise, many communities would find it to their advantage to own large combination plows to be operated by powerful engines.

But after the preliminary work of producing the crop has been completed, the need for cooperation is even more pronounced. The need begins with the gathering of the crop. This is true in the cotton fields, in the orchards, in

the grain fields, and in live stock areas. Uniform grading, sorting, packing, and preserving, is desirable. Here there is need for cooperative canning factories, fruit drying factories, creameries, cheese factories, baling presses, cotton gins, oil mills, and many other similar enterprises. These cooperative enterprises may take the form of capitalistic cooperation, or they may take the form of democratic cooperative societies. I believe that every effort should be made to bring to the people of this country industrial democracy in which the human being is the power behind the throne and not the money invested. This is clearly the rule in our political life, in our social life, in our religious life, and why not in our economic life?

I noted above the desirability and the need for cooperation in the changing of the raw material produced by the farmers, changing cream into butter and cheese, cotton seed into oil, etc. This is not only desirable but it is actually carried on in many parts of the United States. In the large fruit belts, cooperative picking, sorting, and packing is common. In the great grain belts of the North and West, cooperative handling of grain is now an established fact. In the cotton belt of the South, the cooperative warehouses, gins and oil mills have already made their appearance. In the vegetable areas, cooperative marketing and canning societies have gotten a foothold. In the large dairy sections of the North, the cooperative creamery and

cheese factory is now making rapid headway.

No harm can come from discussing the storing of agricultural products in the same breath with cooperation in manufacturing or changing the form of the product. I think it is equally true that no harm can come from discussing at the same time cooperative marketing of such products as the farmers have for sale. Organizations are rapidly forming but thousands are still necessary to look after the marketing of the surplus of fruits, nuts and vegetables, grains and seeds, hay and forage, tobacco, cotton and other products of American farms. Two-thirds of the people of the United States live in cities, towns, and villages. They must be supplied from the farms of the one-third who live in the open country. Both buyers and sellers should be organized into community groups in order to reduce the struggle for an existence to its most economic form. All waste should be elminated wherever possible.

Just as it is true that consumers of agricultural products should organize to purchase supplies from the producers, just as it is desirable to establish cooperative stores in cities, towns, and villages, so it is necessary for farmers to organize into cooperative societies to purchase things which they need but which they do not produce. Here we have need for organization to purchase implements and machinery, live stock, feed, household supplies, and other very useful articles.

Farmers must recognize the uncertainties of nature. Sometimes it rains too much, sometimes not enough; sometimes it hails; sometimes the wind blows; the lightning strikes, and nature is not just as it should be from the viewpoint of the individual farmer. Not all are injured. Indeed, few are hampered in their struggle for a living. This year it is one person, the next year it is another. The same person is seldom visited several years in succession. There is great need here for community of interest so that when one suffers, the burden of the suffering may be distributed among many. In this way all suffer very, very slightly every time the lightning strikes; all suffer slightly whenever it hails; whenever fire burns a building; whenever an animal dies. But under this system, no member of the community suffers very materially at any time. The burden is distributed. The need is mutual insurance for all members in every community. There are at the present time thousands of these mutual societies in the United States and more are being established from year to year. The need is recognized. The instrument is invented. Universal adoption is the demand of the times.

In the struggle for a living, directing force is almost if not quite as essential as physical labor. We cannot depend upon the man of genius, the man with an intuition, the one who is born with foresight. The great mass of people must have constant organization, careful education.

In order to effect this to the highest degree, it is absolutely essential that wider and more satisfactory cooperation be applied in our educational institutions. The country school, isolated, poorly equipped, trying to serve a small number of children with a poorly trained teacher cannot survive many more years. At the present time, in the northern states, with the greatest success in Indiana, consolidated or union schools, are rapidly being established. The consolidated school has three or more rooms with courses suited to the need of the country children. The union school is a combination of two of the smaller schools into a two room school. Cooperation in education, in the consolidation of schools, is one of the great cooperative movements of the present day.

The movement during the century when one turns towards religious activities has been in the direction of disintegration,—breaking down of the old church organizations and the establishment of new sects and denominations. If this movement were found in other fields we might compare it to the movement of individuals who insist upon having a special make of furniture for their rooms, who must have shoes made to order, who must have their heads measured for hats. But we are tending in the opposite direction at the present time. We must accept more and more the standard product because it is economic and because the struggle for a living demands it. And so in the religious field.

Each must be willing to let the other worship in his own way in his own home, but a common church with common instituions accepted by all must be the development of the next generation.

We have noted the need for cooperation in times of war and in times of peace. We have noted the possibilities of political and industrial cooperation. In the struggle to make a living men are forced to act together. We have noted the possibilities of cooperation for social purposes, for educational purposes, for religious purposes. Indeed, there is no field of human activity where cooperation is not an advantage over individualism. But in order to have successful cooperation, it is necessary for each one to yield to the other. With a million people, each has a slightly different way of looking at things. These should form themselves into groups who think most nearly along the same lines. Mutual helpfulness must be adopted throughout the land. If I help my neighbor or make him any better off in any way, I do a good turn for him, a better turn for the country, but best of all for myself, for in turn I am sure to reap many fold.

V

EDUCATION FOR COUNTRY LIFE

WILLET M. HAYS

Surveys of country life have helped to bring clearly into view certain weak and inefficient features in the organization of country life. The great development of science and practical technique during the past half century have placed both farming and home making on a new basis. This new knowledge demands an avenue through which to approach farm production and country life. Some of our older institutions which cannot meet the conditions under an enlarged science and practice of agriculture and home making are giving way. New institutions are being devised and methods that are better adapted to the new conditions are supplanting the old.

Since the county is an administrative unit through which things approach country life from the outside, it will serve for the unit in discussing plans for the recentering and reorganization of country life institutions. Without guidance the county was filled up with too many small, unrelated, unorganized, and often competitive country life institutions. In a county of 500 square miles there were 125 one-room schools, each with a district two miles square. There were often a hundred churches, which, not be-

ing at the same centers as the schools, served to decentralize the community life. Villages and country stores scattered here and there, mainly at still other centers, further tended to decentralization and a lack of organization. In many counties creameries, cheese factories, grange halls, town meeting halls, and other institutions placed without reference to unified neighborhood centers still further make a hodgepodge of the rural community. While this scrambled condition is not without some minor advantages, it makes impossible organic unity of the life in the open country such as is found necessary for efficiency in all biologic, social, and economic organizations.

Recognizing the weakness of this lack of orderly organization of country life, experiments have been made, some of which have resulted in the development of improved institutions which may be fitted together into an efficient system. The one most fundamental feature of the proposed new plans for organization of the open country is very simple but its simplicity aids to give to it its paramount importance. The mere act of consolidating the several one-room schools into a several-room school, increasing the school neighborhood from four square miles to twenty-five square miles, or thereabouts, is the basic feature of the new plan. By traveling in public vans to these schools for a decade or two, the children are prepared to make a unit of the enlarged neighborhood. Not only the educational,

but the social, economic, political, and even the church life of the community may thus be centered about this nucleus, the consolidated rural school.

In the enlarged sphere of this recentered country life new and larger things become possible along many lines. The division of labor in the enlarged school makes possible the employment of a teacher prepared to instruct in agriculture and another prepared to instruct in country home making. These teachers can give instruction not only to the boys and girls, but also to the parents along many vocational lines concerning the management of the farms and the farm homes and concerning neighborhood interests. As soon as all of the several hundred people of the enlarged neighborhood become intimately acquainted in the school, new and more vital forms of recreational and social life are developed.

The cooperative organization for marketing dairy, grain, fruit, live stock, and other products becomes practicable. A political unit, or voting precinct can be made coterminous with the school neighborhood; and may we not hope that the church, in a federated or unified form, will gravitate to a common meeting house beside the consolidated rural school? Societies of horticulture, live stock, women's clubs, granges, etc., centered at the school will gain a more vital foothold than can these organizations now when the rural neighborhoods lack definite centers.

Consolidated rural schools, which had their beginning in New England "towns" many years ago, but which were begun in the open country less than twenty years ago, in northeastern Ohio, are undergoing a rapid development. This re-centering is distinctly a farmers' movement, though teachers generally favor it. Township after township, and district after district is being consolidated until now it is estimated that there are between 2,000 and 3,000 of these open country schools, more or less typical, in that they haul the children to school from a district several miles across to a school building with several rooms. The greatest drawback these schools have had has been the lack of teachers of agriculture and home economics. State colleges of agriculture have only recently appreciated the very great opportunity they have in extending their vocational lines of education through these schools. Once these colleges have produced a sufficient number of teachers of agriculture and country home making to supply two to each school of this kind, the popularity of consolidation will doubtless bound forward with great rapidity. It is estimated that for the nearly 3,000 agricultural counties, approximately 30,000 consolidated rural schools in the open country and 10,000 village schools with country life features in them will be necessary. These would not cover quite all the area, as it is found necessary to retain the one- and two-room school building in isolated places, as in mountain valleys,

where consolidation is not practicable. There will be tributary to each of the nearly fifty state colleges of agriculture, an average of approximately 800 consolidated rural schools, ranging all the way from several such schools in Rhode Island, to several thousand in Texas. In a typical agricultural state like Iowa or Georgia, approximately 2,000 of these schools will give 2,000 opportunities for the state college of agriculture to extend its teaching of agriculture and home economics to all the people. If Iowa agricultural college for example, had 2,000 of its graduates teaching agriculture and 2,000 teaching home economics to one or two hundred thousand of Iowa farm youth from twelve to seventeen years of age, the college would have an influence in the state several times as great as that which it now exerts. If each of these teachers sent annually one graduate from the local schools to study agriculture or home economics in the state college, that institution would soon have tens of thousands of collegiate students in these subjects. It has been suggested that instead of the colleges taking the students direct from these local consolidated rural and village schools, there be a series of secondary schools between these and the college. Following this idea the so-called Page-Wilson bill in Congress would place the federal government in the position of cooperating with the states in establishing an agricultural high school in each eight or ten counties. Thus Iowa, with its nearly 100 counties would have,

broadly speaking, 1,500 consolidated rural schools in the open country and 500 consolidated with, or as a part of the village schools. It would have ten agricultural high schools, and one agricultural college. The Page-Wilson bill also provides that the state normal schools would assist the agricultural college in preparing the teachers of agriculture and home economics for these schools. Again using figures broadly, we may assume that each consolidated rural schools would have 100 pupils in the first six grades, thirty in the 7th and 8th grades, and twenty pupils in the 9th and 10th grades. This would give an aggregate number of 200,000 in the first six grades. Beginning the technical subjects with the 7th grade, it would give, of students studying the vocational courses, 60,000 in the 7th and 8th grades and 40,000 in the 9th and 10th grades, or 100,000 in all. If, now, 500 students attended each of the ten agricultural high schools, there would be in these institutions, 5,000 students. If the agricultural college and the state normal schools then had 5,000 in agriculture and home economics, there would be, counting above the 6th grade, a total of 115,000 studying the vocations of farming and home making.

Since nearly everybody is in favor of such a scheme as we have roughly outlined, may we not look forward to the development of the country church, rural recreational life, cooperation in marketing farm products, and in purchasing farm supplies, and other needed developments to

give us both greatly increased farm products and a country life with larger outlook, socially brighter, with sweeter homes, and a stronger place even than now in our civic and political life?

Can we not build upon the works we see accomplished in the invention of machinery, in the growth of science, and in the scientific breeding of plants and animals, a faith that we can also rebuild our country life organization? Is not this is a great engineering proposition? Have we not developed, here and there, successful units out of which we can construct a whole with greater power for good? Shall we longer assume that we must wait for country life organization to evolve as it may? Are not our leaders ready to do team work in devising a new country life social structure?

If we are ready for this large piece of statesmanship, must we not recognize that the physical act of consolidating the rural schools, thus providing larger country life centers, is the first and most important part in our foundation plan?

The effort above has been to show the parts of the structure: The next question which arises is: What are the agencies which should build the parts of this structure? Manifestly our farmers, our legislators, and our educators must cooperate under newly devised laws in bringing about consolidation. The legislature may do its part by providing a law under which the county can make for itself a plan, so outlining the dis-

tricts of the entire county that no parts are left out. This will avoid inharmonious and incomplete plans where each part of the county consolidates groups of schools upon local initiative. Such a plan unites the entire county in taking this matter up seriously and systematically. The state legislatures could do nothing better than to offer to pay part of the cost of changing from the one room to the several room school. Thus if $1,000 were offered toward the new school building and $500 or more a year toward the additional cost of vocational instruction in the new school, the farmers of the county would be induced to make the change in an orderly way. Money given from the state treasury to these schools will do the most good if given specifically for that part of the work which provides for vocational instruction in agriculture and country home making, leaving the general studies to be paid for as now from local funds. A thousand dollars annually added to the current expense of each of thirty or forty thousand districts would then cost the states $40,000,000. The increased farm production from farmers thus better trained in their business would easily cause an increased production of $400,000,000 or a profit of 1,000 per cent, annually. The better homes, better social conditions, and the stronger life generally arising from this new system of education, would easily be worth in addition several times $400,000,000.

Congress, the state legislatures, and private in-

dividuals are now spending approximately one million dollars annually in extension work, much of which is called demonstration farming. Under this system an expert farmer is employed in each county. He secures the cooperation of some of the best farmers of the county in demonstrating in a scientific and practical way methods of greatly increasing the yields under the average conditions of soil and climate in that county. Between one and two hundred thousand farmers are thus cooperating with the United States Department of Agriculture and the state colleges of agriculture. These same county teachers of demonstration farming also work with the farm boys and girls. Under the auspices of the United States Department of Agriculture about 75,000 farm boys are competing, each growing an acre of corn; and about 25,000 girls are competing, each growing and canning one-tenth of an acre of tomatoes. Those who get the largest yields, and those who produce the products most economically, are given prizes and the one who wins the state prize is usually given a free trip to Washington to call on the President and receive a diploma from the Secretary of Agriculture. The popularity of this work is leading toward the establishment of farm demonstration bureaus in the agricultural counties of the entire United States. In some of these bureaus, along with the demonstration farm teacher a woman expert in the teaching of farm home making is also employed. These several thousand teachers of agri-

culture and home economics are cooperating with the county superintendents in the introduction of agriculture and home making in the rural schools. The colleges of agriculture have on hand, immediately the stupendous task of supplying trained workers for these 3,000 county bureaus, and for the thirty or forty thousand consolidated rural schools which the present movement promises to develop. Assuming that each teacher will remain in the profession for an average of five years, there will be needed, including the teachers in agricultural and home economics in other high schools, approximately 10,000 new teachers each year. Thus, on an average, each of the fifty state colleges of agriculture will be called upon to supply 200 annually. If one-fifth of the number graduating from agricultural and home economics courses become teachers, this will mean average graduating classes of 1,000. Manifestly, these agricultural colleges will need the assistance of agricultural high schools and state normal schools in turning out this enormous number of teachers.

What strength and joy we could add to the religious life of this country if after consolidating the three or four hundred thousand one-room rural schools into forty thousand consolidated rural schools, we could so federate and unite the hundreds of thousands of weak rural churches as to have an average of two churches for each consolidated rural school district and have these

80,000 churches located beside the country life schools! Of course it would be better if there were only one church but that may be too much to hope for. Now we have often one church to less than 200 people. If we had a church to each several hundred people, one near each of these new schools, our country church life would be made over. We could then afford virile and highly trained country preachers who could cooperate with the schools and other country life organizations and thus help give the church that vital relation which our country life civilization now sadly needs.

Let us picture the consolidated rural school with its ten-acre school farm devoted to instruction in agriculture, its five- or six-room school building, and its cottage for the principal. Let us picture beside the school-farm the five or ten-acre parsonage farm with its church and parsonage. We might place beside it the cooperative store, cooperative creamery, and other neighborhood cooperative enterprises. The church or a separate hall would serve as a common meeting place for the entire community. The teacher and preacher could cooperate in helping to build up technical societies, to organize the recreational life of old and young and to aid in bringing things useful to the community from outside institutions, as from the agricultural college, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the state university.

Church organizations, including the Young

Men's Christian Association, our educational associations, conservation commissions, departments of agriculture, agricultural colleges and experiment stations, and other agencies have each in its own way been studying the units of which our country life organization is made. The unsuccessful and the successful features of our country life institutions are now fairly well known, and while we should with renewed vigor continue to investigate all these matters, are we not ready for a period of broad construction? True, this construction must go forward with the greatest care; but it is also true that at best there will be great delay.

What has been said above is a mere illustration of the fact that we have new factors such as the consolidated rural school, the agricultural high school, the agricultural college, the state and branch experiment stations, the county agricultural bureau, which have proven successful, and which might be employed as prominent features in constructing the new system of country life organization. If our farmers, our educators, our legislators, our experts in country life affairs, and our philanthropists will unite in working out broad constructive plans, may we not soon hope to develop more rapidly a new order of things? Those who invented the flying machine merely brought together in a new form of construction, principles and devices nearly all of which were already in successful use. Does the fact that Uncle Sam's domain covers

a vast area make this task of reorganizing our country life insurmountable? Is it not practicable to see the nation, the state, the county, and the consolidated rural school district as units and in their proper relations to each other? If our state legislatures will all pass laws providing both for the making of plans for the redistricting of our counties and appropriating, say half the money required to provide instruction in agriculture and home economics in these schools, the main step will be taken in the reorganization of our country life along lines which cannot help but be far superior to the plans now in use. Our country people are fairly prosperous and happy under present conditions but our cities are clamoring for more food. Under the new system our farmers would be more prosperous and far happier and our cities would have more abundant and cheaper food.

The Federal Congress has under consideration a bill to establish several hundred agricultural high schools and branch experiment stations, one in each five to fifteen counties, 300 to 400 in all. The passage of such a measure would mark a great step, but a far larger step is the consolidation of the rural schools and the preparation of vocational teachers for these schools by the state colleges of agriculture and the state normal schools.

VI

THE COUNTRY CHURCH A SOCIAL CENTER

MATTHEW BROWN MCNUTT

No treatment of this subject can be adequate that does not recognize in the beginning the country *mind* and the *country conditions.*

Human nature is the same everywhere, of course, but people think in terms of their environment and habits of life. Any one who has ever lived or dealt with country people knows that they have a mind peculiar to themselves. A farmer and his wife having lived in the country for fifty years sold their farm and moved to town. Before they had their furniture all placed in their new home the wife remarked to one of her old country neighbors: *"Everything* in town is *so different!"* Of course it was. It is somewhat difficult to analyze this difference between the country mind and the city mind, but it exists. The life of the country people is much more simple, quiet and free from excitement. The country folk are more reserved than their city friends. They are slow to take up with new things. Their habits and standards of life are different. They wear no masks. They have a different code for visiting, neighboring and transacting business. They have a greeting,

a gait, a handshake all their own. They live in a different world—so to speak.

Conditions, too, are very unlike those found in the city. Distance separates homes. Men are engaged in the same occupation. They work separately, independently and in the open. They live on much the same educational, moral and social plane. There is little rivalry or competition. They are self-governing, privileged characters.

It is quite natural and reasonable, therefore, that these rural folk should require institutions differing in method from those found in town or city. While a social-center church might not be possible or applicable in a city it is almost, if not altogether demanded in the country.

It is necessary at the outset, therefore, to clear the ground of all perconceived notions about the country church which have had their origin in the city atmosphere, that the situation may be considered wholly from the country point of view.

Another fact to be recognized in a satisfactory treatment of this subject is that the conditions found in the country today are vastly different from what they were in the pioneer times. The old type of country church does not meet the new needs.

THE NEED OF SOME SOCIAL CENTER IN A COUNTRY COMMUNITY

There are very few societies or organizations

in the average country community. The unit is the home. There are few meeting places and few meetings. There is little to command the attention of an entire rural neighborhood save an occasional "party," "picnic," "school exhibition" or "show." Two farmers plowing in adjacent fields will have a social chat across the line fence while their horses rest. The farmers' wives will indulge in a friendly visit over the telephone, where they are fortunate enough to have this modern convenience. Or, when the 'phone is lacking they will don their sunbonnets and make the visit in person. The young folks will go singly or in pairs to a neighboring home or perhaps to town to spend an occasional evening. If they are church people they will all go to the meeting house on Sunday for worship. This is apt to be the extent of social intercourse in the ordinary rural community unless there is some special provision made for it. These casual meetings are of an individual nature. There exists no community sense, warmth or sentiment.

In the pioneer days the farmers were more dependent. They were obliged to come together frequently to help one another.

In many country localities now, the tendency is to go to town for amusement and entertainment. This is made possible by the better roads and improved modes of travel. But such a custom frequently results in exploiting the farmer and leaving his own home neighborhood a barren

waste in so far as social life and service is concerned.

People are naturally gregarious. They like to be together. They crave companionship. The city and the town furnish many opportunities for social intercourse and for social service,—the country few. Every neighborhood, therefore, town or country, needs some common meeting place where old and young, rich and poor, educated and uneducated may come together for work and play, for sociability, for educational and spiritual uplift.

THE COUNTRY CHURCH IS ADMIRABLY SUITED TO BECOME SUCH A SOCIAL CENTER

All men are more or less religious by nature. They are created in the image of one common Father. Religion ought to be common ground upon which all men can stand. People are naturally brotherly, and they have down in their heart of hearts, a common interest in and reverence and love for the one God and Father of all.

The preaching of denominational dogmas and doctrines in the past has confused a great many minds and has been the means of dividing communities by sectarian walls that are harder to break than adamant. When I hear of men willing to go to a schoolhouse, or tent, or grove, or hall to hear the gospel preached, but who will not go into a church, it always make me think.

It is difficult for a country church to become an effective religious and social center in a sect-ridden community, where each farmer hitches to his carriage Sunday mornings and, with his family, will thread the public highways this way and that for miles till they finally come to the particular brand of worshipers with whom they fancy they can praise God to their satisfaction. A good share of the "world," so-called, is still content merely to be onlookers with reference to this kind of business. It wants none of it.

Let the country community forget its church difference for a generation and emphasize anew the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man and the Lordship and Saviourhood of Jesus Christ and at the same time cultivate and give opportunity for a brotherly service and the country church will become a real religious and social center and a tremendous force for righteousness.

The church may easily be made the social center of a rural community for the reason that there are not the varying and conflicting degrees of social strata in the country that there are in the town and city. Country folk live on practically the same social plane. Their tastes, achievements and standards of living are much the same. And therefore, they can come together in a social way as one great family. They can unite easily in social service because their interests are so much in common.

The fact that such social intercourse and service is associated with the center of religious in-

fluence will be a sure guarantee of its wholesomeness and it will react, also, to a very great advantage upon the religious life of the people. So often it happens that the social life in a community is out of joint with religion. This cannot happen where the inspiration and incentive comes from the church.

With the social center at the church, many special occasions will arise which will call out the whole country-side. This coming together as one body will have a most edifying and socializing effect upon the people. Anniversary days in the country are generally very scarce. This broader fellowship will tend to awaken and foster a wholesome community pride and sentiment. It will do much to break up that individualistic spirit so commonly found among the farming class which is only akin to selfishness. And it will make possible many pleasant and helpful things that could not otherwise be had.

I know of one country church that has established an anniversary day which it calls, "The Annual Re-union." The whole country-side turn out—from two hundred to two hundred and fifty strong and spend the day together. Its purpose is wholly for fellowship and inspiration. Old friends and members of the church who have moved out of the neighborhood come back to renew their acquaintance. Those who cannot attend sometimes send messages which are read at the meeting. A brief memorial service is held for those who have passed away during

the year. A good program is provided, consisting of music and addresses, some by local talent, some from abroad. A banquet is served at noon free to everybody. It is a great day. Farmers leave their work in the field to attend the Annual Re-union. It is talked about all the year, and the dead-level gait gets a severe jolt. Every country church should learn the value of these great inspirational occasions and have them.

This same church has another great time at the New Year sociable held on New Year's eve. Another is held on the 4th of July. Still another at "The Harvest Home and Thanksgiving Festival," when the decorations are the new grains, fruits and vegetables—sent afterwards to the poor in a great city—and when the music and the speaking are right hearty in the presense of God's wonderful bounty.

This same church conducts a Lyceum Course every season—not for pecuniary profit, but for the sole purpose of bringing wholesome entertainment and lectures within reach of everybody in the community. And all the people patronize it liberally and heartily irrespective of creed. The Catholics and the German Lutherans attend. People from the surrounding towns are there when the weather and roads are favorable. No attraction from the Lyceum Bureaus draws the crowds that the home talent entertainments draw.

The religious festivals, such as Christmas,

Easter and Children's Day have a prominent place in this church, and all of them are largely attended by everyone in the community.

These special occasions whether religious, patriotic, social or educational, develop a great variety of talents in a great number and variety of people. This plan not only interests and develops the individuals themselves, but it sets them to work toward community ideals and enterprises. It stimulates team work which is usually sadly lacking among the rural folk.

Another great value of such work is that it calls for leadership among the people themselves.

Dr. Warren H. Wilson well observes in his book on "The Church and the Open Country" the following: "The community objective determines the type of leaders. If the means be religious, ethical, and social, the leaders who shall arise will be devout and popular men. If the meetings of the people are purely for business purposes, the leaders of the town will be concerned alone with its business prosperity. It is the business of the minister and the teacher in the country community to agitate the community and so unite it that the leaders of the community shall be men (and women) of conscience, of intelligence and of a progressive spirit. If the loafers of the town are the only ones who have opportunity for frequent associations, then the loafers will select the leaders. But if the regular meetings of the town are bright, intel-

lectual and popular; if the enjoyment is furnished by music, by dramatic expression, by the remembrance of the past of the community, and by planning for the future, then the leadership of the town will flow from these sources and the common mind of the community will demand and will secure those personalities who shall stand before all the people to accomplish that for which the whole people aspire."

The commingling of country people at the church center may be made a real stimulus to many kinds of practical service which shall help to make ruraldom a new earth. Lessons will not be assigned and recited, perhaps, and studies completed as in a school, but many beginnings will be made through these church activities that will be completed in the home, the school, or college, in years to come—beginnings in scientific study, music, home-making, better farming, more intellectual and conscientious citizenship, esthetic taste, home and rural sanitation, better business, better living, better schools, world-wide evangelization, and what not. The social center church may be made a place of inspiration, a place where high ideals are projected, an atmosphere in which all the people are helped to find themselves, to know their gifts and to know their own true life. Everything, indeed, that pertains to the needs and welfare of a rural community, may find substantial encouragement in a live social center country church.

It is nonsense to say that these social activities centering in the country church will detract from religion and lead to worldliness. They produce the opposite result as has been demonstrated in many social service churches. Social service tends to give life and reality to religion.

The fact that so many community boys break away from the church in the teen age shows that there is something seriously wrong with the methods employed in our country churches. This accounts for the sparsity of men in many churches—the boys are not held.

Suppose the boys, and others for that matter —have received the message of salvation which the Church has to give them and have become disciples of Christ. What then? Are they simply to rest the remainder of their lives in the consciousness of this peaceful state and find their chiefest enjoyment in the thought alone, that they are saved? A lot of them get excused from this monotony, when there is nothing else to follow. Many more wish they were out and still others remain good, but are good for nothing so far as building up the community in things that are worth while is concerned.

People are saved to serve. They are not only saved *from* something, but *to* something. The Church is full of people that gloat over their personal salvation, who at the same time have not the least interest in saving anybody else. Church life and business is bound to become insipid and drag where the gospel of social serv-

ice is not preached along with the gospel of salvation and where Christian people are not trained to cooperate and lend themselves to the good of all in the community.

A power of any kind is useless unless it is harnessed to some worthy object or task. A saved man is of little use in the Kingdom until he becomes active in saving others and in transforming the community where he lives.

There is a great power centered in the Christian people of the community that has never been harnessed to anything. Country preachers and evangelists have been working solely for the conversion of the farmer and have been satisfied when this is accomplished, failing to set before him any definite form of service. Country teachers have confined their efforts mainly to putting into the hands of the country children the tools for getting an education, namely, reading, writing and numbers, to cramming the children's minds with text book knowledge. But these teachers, with the country preachers have failed to inspire in these young farmer boys and girls, or their parents, any community spirit or pride that would even so much as beautify the school playground or plan and arrange a decent church lawn, much less transform the whole community. Witness the surroundings of thousands and thousands of country schools and churches—barring some magnificent exceptions.

So that both the country school and the country church—the two principal institutions of the

country—have missed and are missing the mark by not inculcating community ideals and setting the country people to the task of building up the community in the things that make for a more abundant life.

A really converted man will naturally want to set his environment and living conditions—as well as those of his neighbor—in perfect order. But he needs to be directed in this reconstruction. Herein lies the great opportunity for the country church and the country school. They must work together for the common good of the whole community.

Christian people in cities and town have been organized, whether by the church or the school or some other agency, or by all. With this organization they have been led to unite their forces and to center them on the task of building a new city. As a result of this organization the city folk are enjoying a civilization a hundred years in advance of their country friends, according to one student of the times.

To quote Dr. Wilson in conclusion: "The needed teaching of our time is that of the organized community. Christian people and other well-meaning folk must all assemble as the leaders and must be enlisted as the workers in community betterment. They must be taught to recognize clearly the bounds of their community. They must come to see how fully their own lives, and the lives of their children and kindred are spent in that little environment. They must

make of it a republic to be ruled in sanitary respects, in all matters of beauty, and in the recreative life, in the interest of developing personality and of the unfolding social life.

"In the service of this little republic the influence of the Church will be the dominating element. If Christian churches are not the community centers, then new churches will arise. This great task will be done."

VII

BETTER CHURCH BUILDINGS—A NECESSITY

N. W. Stroup

The Country Church is the one institution that *has done* and *can do* most to enrich individual character, make home happier, and daily toil more attractive and gainful. Other societies may supplement, but none can replace the work of the Christian Church. As its steeple towers above every other building in village and hamlet, so its ideals, its inspirations, its message to men, its hopes and helps are pre-eminent. May we not be guilty of sanctioning a condition such as David faced when he declared—"I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains?"

We realize the imperative need of a new type of rural church architecture. The new era in education has been brought about by the centralized graded schools and the introduction of agricultural courses. The electric railway, the automobile and the macadam and brick roads, has given us a new era in transportation. The country telephone and rural mail delivery and the increased valuation of farm property has created a new era in country commerce. In the

face of these advances the rural church has been compelled to use an equipment that is out of harmony with this new era in which we live, and to which we must minister.

The conditions in the urban church in contrast to those of the rural church are very striking. The city during the century has had a phenomenal growth in prosperity and population. The old frame buildings of a generation ago have been replaced by fine stone structures adapted to present needs, and furnished with the best up-to-date equipment. The rural communities during the same period were being deprived of their best families, and the remnant that remained was so heavily burdened with the current expense budgets that new buildings seemed impossible. When we come to know conditions and causes, we are no longer surprised at finding results such as now confront at least seventy-five per cent of our rural leaders.

The new vision of man as related to the larger appeal has called forth a new type of church architecture. We have outlived the false dualism which insisted on drawing a distinct line of cleavage between things designated as secular and things sacred. We have come to believe in the whole man—both the temple and the tenant, and would not that either be abused or neglected. Man as a totality is to be served and saved. Nothing human is foreign to the modern Christian in his ministry. We now seek not merely to save souls, but to save the total

man, since as Hugh Price Hughes once declared: "All the souls he knew anything about possessed physical bodies and lived on earth among men." The church of half a century ago did not think to provide for physical and social beings, and in the building there was no place for the boy or girl.

The Church, spiritual in message and motive, is yet material in method and means. It must have a body through which it works and wins. The adaptability of the organism in and through which the spirit is to do its service is a very important element in church work. It is an encouraging sign of the times that architects and church officials are coming to appreciate this fact and are placing emphasis upon the proper construction of the building. While it is true, as one architect puts it, that "Bad architecture is as baneful as bad grammar, and more enduring in its influence than unorthodox preaching, therefore our churches should be leading exponents of good taste and good style."

Buildings express ideals and they speak a varied language. A hut and a palace each tell their own story and refer to a distinct type of society. Churches should give forth a message and their presence should be capable of pointing each passer-by to the Father who loves, and the Son who saves. Churches are the visible expression of the invisible God, just as Christians are incarnations of the unseen Christ. They are more than marble and more precious than any

mere beauty of design or dignity of architecture. These buildings stand in a class that is both unique and inspirational.

But in this twentieth century *utility* is written large in religion and education, as well as in business. The monk and the scholarly recluse are not vital to this era, if in reality they ever were in any era. The church edifice of today should be beautiful and artistic, but it *must* be practical and able to meet the test of utility. Without detracting from spiritual worship, we are coming to place a new emphasis upon Christian work. We are discovering that men *may* and *should* worship God in their daily work, and that these are in reality part and parcel of each other.

We, unlike our forefathers, look upon the church not so much as a holy of holies into whose sacred precincts only the few may enter, but rather as a building set apart to be used in Christlike ministry to men. Our holy of holies is wherever a sincere soul is found seeking God. We speak less of the holiness of temples built of brick and stone, and emphasize more the infinite value of human beings created in the image and likeness of a holy God. The change is not one of spirit, but wholly one of service. Church builders a century ago emphasized three things—beauty, stability, and architectural orthodoxy. Some would insist on adding a fourth, "utility," but they put a very narrow interpretation upon the word.

The country church building as it now exists is one of our chief barriers to success. While it is true that the demand for able leadership is imperative, it is equally important that they have adequate buildings through which to do the work. A first class workman is unable to do efficient service if he is compelled to use inferior instruments. The building should be adapted to the needs of the particular community to which it is expected to minister. It must be *a place in which to work and worship;* a community center from which shall radiate an atmosphere of reverence and righteousness, and a spirit of unselfish service for others. Ruskin gave expression to the highest motive in church building and in Christian ministry when he said:—

"I do not want a marble church for every village, nay, I do not want marble churches at all for their own sake, but for the sake of the spirit that would build them. The Church has no need of any visible splendors; her power is independent of them,—her purity is in some degree opposed to them. The simplicity of a pastoral sanctuary is lovelier than the majesty of an urban temple; and it may be more than questioned whether to the people, such majesty has ever been the source of any increase of effective piety; but to the builders it has been and must ever be. It is not the church we want, but the sacrifice; not the emotion of admiration, but the act of adoration; *not the gift, but the giving.*"

The modern church needs not only an audience room and a Sunday-school room, but committee rooms, social rooms, a boys' club room, reading room, gymnasium, kitchen and dining-room. It is the plant used in accomplishing the varied work of Christianity and should be as well equipped and as wisely adapted for efficiency as a twentieth century machine shop. The social, economic, and political problems of the hour are all fundamentally religious and the state must look to the Christian Church for their ultimate solution. This is a mighty challenge and ought to stir us out of our stereotyped and antiquated methods and cause us to redouble our energy in the conquest of Christ's coming Kingdom. We must gain contact with the community by going about doing good as the Master did. It does not matter whether we call it social service, "individual work for individuals," or applied Christianity, the essential thing is that the work be done.

This work may be done in part by means of the Christian education of the Bible school, in part by the prayer service, in part by the preached word, in part through boys' clubs and men's leagues and also by influencing the boy's home life, athletic life and school life. We must be all things to all men that we may win all. We are divinely called and commissioned to save the lost and the Master made no provision for failure. He said that we should become "fishers of men" and gave no restrictions

as to the style of pole or the kind of bait. The call is to catch men and we dare not be disobedient or derelict in duty. If we are convinced that the old building erected two generations ago is illy adapted to our needs, then we should proceed with the alterations and adaptation of that which is merely the human instrument used to serve divine ends.

The salvation of our young people is conditioned on the *human side* by the manner in which we provide a place for them in our building and speak to them in our message. In the church of a century ago there was no room for an active boy or girl. While in those days they had nowhere else to go, today the world has a hundred open doors for them night and day offering the most up-to-date attractions, so that it is worse than useless for a few good saints to gather in the church and condemn the dance hall across the street that has caught the young people. Less mere condemnation and more aggressive service and self-denial would solve the problem. Let the saints bring their tithes into the treasury and build a new church home for the young people for whom they now have no room. In one village church where this call, which for a generation had been unheeded, was answered in the construction of an attractive basement, one hundred young people recently came together for a pleasant social evening under clean and wholesome religious influence. This manless church of a year ago now has an

energetic men's league of over fifty members.

The Master calls upon us to meet the demands of our day and generation and to overcome evil with good. While we may get inspiration out of singing—

"Faith of our fathers living still,"

we must not forget that we are divinely called and commissioned—

"To serve the present age
Our calling to fulfill."

Our idolatry of method is no justification for an unfruitful ministry. We are to be wise and by wisdom win. To excuse our failure by complaining of the indifference and irreverence of the people, is unbecoming the followers of the conquering Christ.

"The time has arrived," in the thought of the Country Life Commission, "when the Church must take a larger leadership, both as an institution and through its pastors in the social reorganization of rural life. The rural church must be more completely than now a Christian social center." This means abler leadership, better salaries, better business methods and better buildings. The building is only the physical organism through which the work is carried on, but it is nevertheless a very important element in the efficiency of the ministry. A one-armed man or an individual who walks with a

crutch may, and often does accomplish great things, but he would do better with a complete body. Some men who have been semi-invalids have wrought signal victories, but their infirmities are no argument against health and strength. Our forefathers won many victories and saved thousands in log cabins and barns, but that was in the day of homespun and handpower. Their problems were not ours.

> "New occasions teach new duties
> Time makes ancient good uncouth."

It is sometimes true, as Marion Lawrance states, that the rural church is the most unsightly building in the town. It is far too common to find an old frame building that has not been painted for twenty years, whose foundation is partly gone, with windows broken, a leaky roof, with paper and plaster falling off, with a wood pile in the front vestibule and a yard grown up with weeds and briers. "How dwelleth the love of God in such a place?" These sad conditions are not always due to poverty, but more often to community carelessness and personal stinginess.

The modern emphasis insists on having the gospel applied to every-day life. The ecclesiastic leaders of the Middle Ages thought they had safely confined Christianity within the walls of monasteries and cathedrals, but they awoke during the sixteenth century to find that they had, in reality, shut it out. We have almost en-

tirely ceased erecting costly cathedrals and are building serviceable workshops which are in accord with the words of the Master when He said—"I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." "The quaint structures of our grandfathers, with tower-like pulpits and penlike apartment-pews, with long stems of stove-pipe suspended by wires from the ceiling, and ill-smelling oil-lamps," have not all passed away even in this twentieth century. They served their day, but they have not ceased to be.

We find churches still in use that were built before the Sunday-school had become a part of the Christian program. It does not seem reasonable that such buildings could be suited to the demand of the present. It is very often true that "inadequate and poorly adapted buildings make the best teaching and training impossible." "The teachers need the help of good equipment, good ventilation" as well as good graded lessons. The church of the future is to be more and more a place for instruction and inspiration. Pastoral teaching will take precedence over the office of priest and prophet. Jesus was, and is, the world's great Teacher. We are to continue and complete "the things He began both to do and to teach."

We visited a manufacturer recently who had completed a new factory and installed new machinery. In reply to our inquiry as to how many of the machines were the same as he had used twenty-five years before, he replied that

the machinery was all the latest improved, and none of it more than ten years old. He was manufacturing the very same sort of goods and using the same steam power, but it was now done by new methods, new machines and in new buildings. We preach the same gospel that our fathers preached. We send out the same brand of Christians convicted and converted by the same Holy Spirit, but we need new buildings and new methods that will make it possible for the Church to successfully compete with present day conditions and customs.

We would wherever possible build new buildings. There is always an optimistic suggestion in a new church. It speaks of a living, growing faith and future progress. It announces to the community that the Church expects to stay, and that retreat or surrender are not a part of the Christian plan. On the other hand, an antiquated, out-of repair, tumbled-down building is favorable to indifference and infidelity. A neglected church is apt to mean neglected morals. The last quarter of a century has been characterized not by courageous conquest, but by a rather discouraged attempt to avoid retreat. We need to restore community confidence in the Rural Church and inspire courage in the loyal leaders and discouraged officials.

In many communities the best we can confidently expect just now is that they will repair and remodel the building. This is a practical possibility in almost every rural parish. The

old church can be raised up and a good roomy basement provided for use in holding socials and literary entertainments. This can be done at a cost not to exceed one thousand dollars, and in some neighborhoods for a very much less amount. There are some old buildings that are so large and so greatly in excess of the present needs that a portion of the audience room could be partitioned off for Sunday-school and social purposes. This plan when carried out by a practical church architect has many good features. It not only affords a more satisfactory room for regular worship, but furnishes a complete set of class rooms for the work of Christian education in the art of right living.

In a few communities the old church has been repaired and used as a social center, a dining hall, a Sunday-school room, and week-night chapel, while a new building has been erected to accommodate the regular Sabbath services. In some villages where two or more denominations are struggling to exist, there *could* and *should* be the uniting of the Christian people of both churches under the guidance of one pastor. This would enable the members to use one building as a sort of parish house, or sell the one and invest the money in remodeling the other. As a concrete illustration of what might be a practical plan of federation in many rural sections, we would mention two villages four miles apart, each having a Methodist and Congregational church with a pastor residing in each community. In

one of these centers the Methodist church is at present much the stronger, while in the other center the Congregational church seems to have a better hold upon the people. There can hardly be a question but that the wise thing to do is for the members of both churches to unite in the interest of efficiency, economy, and Christian comity. This would make it possible for each pastor to receive a living wage and a worthy hearing for his message. It would also solve the better-building problem, and replace two run down churches with one modern edifice.

John Keble was one of England's most famous country pastors. In his early years he received a salary of but five hundred dollars a year. It is said that he found "the church at Hursley in poor condition, and unadapted for worship according to his ideas, and knowing that the poor rural community which he was serving could not meet the expense of rebuilding, he met the cost himself, some thirty thousand dollars, providing for this large expenditure by the receipts from the sale of "The Christian Year." This is one way to meet the problem of providing new and better buildings. Rural America may well pray God to send a few men like John Keble who will be content to give their time and talents to these out-of-city communities.

We are glad to see the dawning of a new day in country life. In the short space of four years the attitude of scores of representative men has

been wholly changed. The call for conservation in rural resources has become one of the leading principles of the nation. The farmer and the farm are certain to regain their rightful place in the program of democracy. This is no time for religious retreat, but the opportune hour for a great advance. We must retrench our position and reaffirm our purpose to make the rural church a center of the social, intellectual, and religious forces of the entire community. The men who possess a large vision of country life will demand better building in and through which to express the larger ministries of modern Christianity to *the needs of all men and all the man.*

VIII

THE VALUE OF RECREATION IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Myron T. Scudder

Country life must be made more attractive or our rural districts will lose population to a point that threatens national disaster. No nation can long continue to exist unless its rural population is numerous, vigorous, contented, patriotic, and righteous.

As every one knows our country districts have long been suffering depletion. Even now multitudes of the better classes are busy exchanging their country homes for homes in the city. Of course a part of the exodus is entirely normal and is caused by economic conditions, such for instance as the application of machinery to agriculture. It has been said that "work once requiring 14 men can now be done by 4 men, and in such a situation there is nothing for the 10 men to do but to go to the city." Granting these figures, a migration of 10 men out of 14 is, of course, tremendous, but under the circumstances it cannot be helped, and need not be considered alarming. But when more than 10 out of 14 leave their rural homes and when there is nothing in the world that all 14 want so much as to get away from the country and into the city, then the situation becomes menacing indeed.

Now the truly rural mind as developed on the farm is greater than the urban mind. It is almost purely democratic. In it, labor and capital are reconciled, and the farmer sees no reason why he and his hired help should not eat together, as well as work side by side in shirt-sleeves. In it the professional, the scientific, and the mercantile must strike a fairly even balance. The fully developed rural mind, the product of its environment, is more original, more versatile, more accurate, more philosophical, more practical, more persevering than the urban mind; it is a larger, freer mind, and dominates tremendously.

It is because of this type of farm bred mind that our leaders have largely come from rural life. Ninety-four per cent of the leading citizens of one of our large Eastern cities, according to Dr. Hillis, of Brooklyn, were brought up on the farm. Of a group of one hundred representative men, commercial and professional, in Chicago, it was found that eighty-five per cent were farm or village bred. Eighty-five per cent of the students in four colleges and seminaries came from country districts, while upwards of sixty per cent of the men and women mentioned in "Who's Who" likewise are from the country. Dr. Hillis well says: "The brain and nerve centers are not more dependent upon the soundness of the related tissues than the city upon the rural districts."

And it is, of course, essential to national wel-

fare that the rural districts should continue to furnish such leaders and therefore should be populous, prosperous, and contented. Yet everyone knows that they are neither the one nor the other. Isolation, hard work, long hours and small returns have increased discontent especially amongst the young, while the call of the city has been increasingly seductive. So it is not to be wondered at that a natural, legitimate migration from country to town has swelled to alarming proportions, scores of thousands fleeing like fugitives from the hardships and isolation of the farm lands, their departure making still more dreary and deadening to those who remain behind, the isolation from which they have escaped, and augmenting a discontent that in many sections has caused people to settle down into an almost hopeless lethargy. The uppermost sentiment everywhere seems to be: "Anything but this! How can I get away?" National welfare requires that this point of view be changed to one in which, with cheery hopefulness all ask: "How can we make conditions such that we shall be glad to stay?"

At this point it is important to bear in mind that the terms "rural" and "country" mean very different things in different sections. A statement that is entirely applicable to a farming section or to country villages in, say, the mountain regions of eastern Tennessee, or perhaps nearer home, should not be considered "personal" by residents of the many cultured, rural

communities of this land of ours. Think of the mountain whites and Georgia "crackers," think of the sparsely settled population of the Far West, of the rude mining settlements and lumber districts, perhaps fifty miles from any railroad, think of the black belt of the South, the half-civilized Indians, the undesirable immigrants, and others who are scattered over our agricultural districts East, West, North, and South, perhaps nearer than we like, and remember that these are part and parcel of the rural problem.

In many rural communities, conditions are disheartening, indeed. With schools and churches feeble or extinct, no worse places could be conceived of in which to bring up children. No wonder people want to leave. Yet for the sake of the country at large, something must be done for them; they must be made wholesome. But while a complete and frank description of such rural conditions as may be found in many parts of all our states would make a dark picture, yet with it all one would have to tell of many communities of refinement and of great prosperity. It is encouraging to note, that as an aid to improving conditions, the telephone, the trolley, and the rural free delivery are operating favorably. The rural school and church are beginning to feel a new life. Economic conditions are also improving, and farm lands and crops are more valuable than ever before. A rural literature is rapidly developing, teeming with excellent books and magnificently edited periodicals. Most as-

tonishing are the varied agencies which have begun to operate for social uplift. The future is certainly full of hope. Amongst these agencies the playground and recreation idea is attracting more and more attention.

Everyone has observed how the play spirit is sweeping over the country. The quest of recreation is not only legitimate; it is as essential as food, shelter, and religion. Mr. Joseph Lee, the father of the playground movement in this country, says: "The thing that most needs to be understood about play is that it is not a luxury, but a necessity: it is not something that a child likes to have, it is something that he must have if he is to grow up. It is more than an essential part of his education; it is an essential part of the law of his growth, of the process by which he becomes a man at all." This is true for the country child as well as for the city child. We are beginning to catch the wide significance of play and to recognize that the playground is a social institution just as much as the home, the church, and the school.

It must be borne in mind that play in the country is not so much to promote health as to develop the higher social instincts, to introduce another powerful centripetal factor into country life which will counteract the expulsive features which have been so actively depopulating our everywhere give but little thought to the recreational life, while with certain elements of the recreation and amusement. The older people

everywhere give but little thought to the recreational life, while with certain elements of the population the quest for means of passing leisure hours often takes crude, uninteresting and even childish forms, not infrequently is rough and grotesque, and altogether too commonly leads to immorality to a degree that is not generally suspected.

Into this matter of promoting wholesome recreation for the young and the old, the rural church, the reconstructed school, the rural Y. M. C. A., the Grange, and other fraternal orders must enter heart and soul. As the writer has stated elsewhere, an adequate program of play would include pleasurable outdoor and indoor occupation for (a) day schools, (b) homes, (c) Sunday-schools, (d) other social organizations, public and private, suitable for Sundays as well as week-days, adjusted to the season of the year, and adapted to the needs of (1) very little children, (2) children from eight to thirteen, (3) boys and girls in the adolescent period, (4) adults; sex as well as age being taken into account when necessary. The word play thus broadened brings us into the realms of kindergartens, manual training departments, vacation schools, summer camps, boys' clubs, girls' clubs, nature-study clubs, camera clubs, collection clubs; it has to do with swimming, fishing, boating, skating, skeeing, and snow-shoeing; also with all forms of athletics; with the use of tools and implements, with the use of clay, plasticine,

paper pulp, and putty for modeling; with the use of tops and marbles, bean-bags, balls and kites, stilts, toys, soap bubbles, cards, dissected maps, scrap books, and the myriad other amusement materials, plays and games which are the heritage of the human race, and without sharing in which no child can grow to complete manhood or womanhood, and no adult can live a cheerful, joyous, well-rounded-out life.

Briefly, let us itemize some of the more important phases of a propaganda for socialized, supervised recreation, indoors and outdoors in home, church, school and community.

1. Amongst other indoor activities we should emphasize story telling Mr. Richard T. Wyche, so well known as an apostle of this great and important art, says, "There are many homes that cannot afford libraries and the adornment of art, but no home is so humble that parents cannot gather the children around the fireside on a winter's evening or about the doorsteps in the twilight of a summer's day and tell them stories." Suggestive lists of books on story telling may be obtained of the Playground and Recreation Association of America.

2. From the story told at the fireside to the story told on the stage or platform before an audience is a natural evolution. Dramatic societies should be organized in every good sized community, and where the population is scattered several communities may unite to form one. Note the results of an active village dra-

matic society in Oberammergau. Oberammergau cannot be duplicated elsewhere, perhaps, yet properly conducted dramatics will enrich life greatly in our country communities.

3. Clubs for young people are as necessary in the country as in the city. Organizations like the Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, Knights of King Arthur, and Pioneer Girls should be fostered and supervised by adults. Here is where the country pastor may exert a powerful influence, as well as the country teacher.

4. The Grange and other fraternal orders, fire companies, literary and library associations furnish club life for men and women, and in these the recreation side may be emphasized. To such organizations the children must appeal for sympathy and help in their playground propaganda.

5. Promoted by these organizations, communities should maintain lecture and entertainment courses, reading circles, a public library, and where possible, a choral union. Then there is the stereopticon, with its wonderful possibilities. The old-fashioned husking-bees and barn-raisings are things of the past in most communities, but why not bring back the spelling match and the singing school?

6. Church, school, and other socials should pay more intelligent attention to their programs of recreation. Social evenings are very often uninteresting and foolish because not carefully planned. On such occasions there may well be a serious core to the evening, a short literary

and musical program, or a club meeting to discuss matters of community interest, to be preceded and followed by plenty of fun and amusement. Well thought out programs of entertainment for all sorts of gatherings in the country are greatly needed.

7. Township or county gatherings, extending through several days have been successfully maintained in several states. Most famous of these is the Hesperia movement, a winter gathering of Michigan farmers and teachers which has met for years in Hesperia, miles from any railroad, to enjoy a program of lectures, music, and discussion from Thursday to Saturday night. It is a notable instance of the efficacy of a properly conducted "Stay on the Farm Movement," which is far more important than the "Back to the Farm Movement."

8. Itinerant social and literary meetings have proved a success. Assembling by strawload or walking parties on a given Saturday, bringing their lunch and meeting in a schoolhouse, church, or village hall, people from several communities may gather with great profit and pleasure several times a year.

9. Systematic effort should be made to teach plays and games to children and to instruct them in the art of framing up programs of indoor amusement. Country children do not play enough because they do not know how to play. Their repertoire of games is exceedingly limited, and their elders are even worse off than they are.

Hence the importance of systematic effort to teach them how and what to play. Splendid work along this line is being done by Y. M. C. A. county secretaries.

10. Manual training, industrial and domestic arts, and nature-study furnish indoor occupation of high recreational value. The making of collections of stamps, eggs, autographs, etc; should be encouraged as should the making of useful articles for the home and school. Manual methods in the Sunday-school are decidedly in point here.

11. The importance of having, in connection with church, school, and home a definite place for play and recreation materials, which should be treated with the same dignity as a library and should be as liberally maintained as possible. In it should be kept not only the toys and games, but materials for constructing various articles, drawing and painting materials, costumes that have been used in dramatics and that will surely come in handy again, pictures, projection apparatus, etc. Right here it may be said that the library may cooperate very effectively. Why not make the library a center for recreation?

Outdoor recreation and play for country communities may include (1) activities suggested by the environment itself, such as hunting, fishing, camping, tramping, mountain climbing, winter sports, water sports, certain phases of nature-study and of farm life, like sugar making, husking bees, and so on; (2) group activities for

boys like the Boy Scouts, and for girls like the Campfire Girls; (3) regular playground activities with organized and supervised plays, games and athletics; (4) community activities, such as pageants and festivals, county fairs and athletic field days and play picnics. Of these:

1. Hunting and fishing cannot figure conspicuously in the long settled sections of the country for the obvious reason that fish and game are scarce. When these sports are no longer available, other forms of recreation must be provided to take their place, though not with the expectation that they will be as effective. The old-fashioned husking bee is no more, but the sugar bush is still with us, though in less romantic form because of modern methods. It is now very businesslike and is no longer the recreation center it used to be in numberless places, with its rude shelter, its kettles, sap buckets, and roaring campfires. To supplement, or take the place of these old time recreations, the more modern forms of camping may well be encouraged in the country. Who has not known boys puting up a tent near the house, or making a rough shelter in the woods and sleeping and eating in it for days at a time? A few tents owned by the church perhaps, or by the grange, or even by a ladies' club, may be made a means of grace to many if under the supervision of a wise leader.

2. Tramping is an almost unknown, or at least unpractised form of recreation in America.

Pile some bedding into a wagon with provisions and extra clothing, and, with some objective point two or three days away, let the trampers set out properly supervised and guided, camping along the road and thoroughly enjoying an outing whose retrospect is only less delightful than the actual experience.

3. What has been called the "caravan" gives an interesting outing. It is a train of wagons fitted up as comfortably and as attractively as may be desired, a la gypsy style, one serving for kitchen, another as a parlor, others as sleeping rooms, the caravan moving leisurely through the country in a comfortable outing.

4. Mountain climbing is just beginning to be appreciated by people in this country, but chiefly by city dwellers. Tens of thousands of our country people live near superb mountains, the conquest of which by climbing will prove most inspiring to mountaineering clubs whose membership should include women and girls.

5. For the water there is the house boat, with a great variety of possibilities, perhaps too expensive for a single family, but feasible for a cooperative effort, especially if fitted up in the simple, inexpensive way practised by fishermen and river boatmen. Tramping and camping expeditions may be accompanied by programs of plays and games, athletic events, and water sports to any extent desired.

6. The Boy Scouts and Campfire Girls should be organized in country districts as well as in

cities, though possibly with slightly different standards and tests. "Rural Scouts" have already appeared in the West and perhaps that name instead of "Boy Scouts" should be adopted for country boys. Campfire Girls is admirably organized for both country and city girls, with its central idea of making attractive the domestic life as well as the outdoor activities. The vocational clubs, the Tomato Clubs of the South and the Corn Clubs, at the same time that they are professedly vocational, lend themselves to social recreation as well.

Thus far we have touched upon the more informal modes of recreation, but we come now to the still more specialized modes which center in and about regularly equipped playgrounds. And here we must claim that organized and supervised play is as much a social institution as are the Church and the school.

In country places playgrounds will have to come, if they come at all, through the generosity of some individuals or clubs, or on the initiative of some organization like a powerful school or college, a wide-awake church, or a county work department of the Y. M. C. A. And they are actually coming in considerable numbers and in all parts of the country. Everywhere they bring about the same social results; that is, they bring about a fine community spirit, awaken civic consciousness and cooperation, and make for a whole-souled companionship instead of for individualism and isolation.

Regular, supervised play should begin at home. How fortunate the children whose parents are in sympathy with play and who will occasionally find time to play with their children! Sand piles, swings, and other inexpensive apparatus are easily provided, and so are the chinning bar, jumping pit, and running course.

Even the one-room school may be a factor in promoting supervised play. Helpful literature is now procurable by those interested and willing to take up this work. The country road may have to be pressed into service for some of the activities, but every school should have ample grounds laid out and equipped for volley ball, badminton, prisoner's base, captain ball, base ball, or playground ball, relay races, etc. Marbles and kites should be encouraged, as should a hundred other games that are readily learned. Folk dancing should be revived in the country as it has been in the city. Here again are manuals of instruction ready for the use of those who take up the work.

Teachers, pastors, and play leaders should make use of excursions, picnics and camping expeditions, as suggested above.

National holidays and other special occasions may be observed by the holding of pageants. The Fourth of July, for instance, may become a day of pleasure and profit for all by celebrating it in this manner. The pageant idea for country communities has been worked out with exceptional success by Mr. W. C. Langdon at Thet-

ford, Vt. His pamphlet, "The Pageant of Thetford," is a classic in the literature of recreation.

An essential phase of playground activity is athletics. These cannot be elaborate of course. A beginning is usually made by having the boys run, jump, and chin themselves in accordance with certain directions and standards. A country school athletic league organized among the schools of a county or commissioners' district tends to foster all kinds of clean athletics among country children, to teach them and their teachers outdoor and indoor games, and to bring the schools together at least once a year in a great field day and play picnic. The field day has been found to be a very important factor in promoting play in the country. Since the first field day of this sort was started by the writer in a little village in New York State some seven years ago, the idea has very generally spread through the country, and it may be said that the field day and play picnic has become an important rural institution.

Perhaps it is not too much to say that through properly supervised play and well conducted festivals the civic and institutional life of an entire country district may be permanently quickened and inspired, the play movement thus making surely for greater contentment, cleaner morals, more intense patriotism and righteousness on the farm lands and village populations of our country.

IX

POVERTY AND DEGENERATION IN THE COUNTRY

JOHN R. HOWARD, JR.

Professor T. N. Carver of Harvard University, in his "Principles of Rural Economics" (p. 27), says, "Where the conditions of life are as easy as they have been in this country up to the present time, even very inefficient specimens of humanity have been able to hold their own against competition. . . . Accordingly one finds, in out-of-the-way places in different sections of our country, a degree of ignorance, inefficiency, and moral degeneracy which it will be impossible to find in any of the countries of western Europe."

Edward R. Johnstone, Superintendent of the Training School for Backward and Feeble-Minded, at Vineland, N. J., in an article in the *Survey* for March 2, 1912, writes, "The dependency, crime, immorality, and poverty of the Jukes of Ulster County, N. Y., is paralleled in at least two counties of New Jersey, and probably in every state in the Union."

Such statements as these but voice the common opinion, frequently expressed, that poverty and degeneracy is prevalent in our rural districts,—especially in the east, to be sure, but also

in certain regions of the west which has lured from the farms in the east not only the energetic and intelligent but also the lazy and incompetent. As Professor Meeker of Princeton says, "The west is full of men who would have starved to death had they or their fathers remained in New England, or Pennsylvania."

It was hoped in presenting this chapter to hunt down some of these generalizations, and present facts based upon actual inquiries. President Bailey of Cornell says, "It is of the first importance that we do not set out on this new work (the Country Life Movement) with only general opinions and superficial and fragmentary knowledge." There was not time for original investigation, but it was hoped to present the findings of studies already made. The results of inquiries made in thirty-seven states show that there *exists* nothing but "superficial and fragmentary knowledge." Such few rural surveys as have been made have almost entirely overlooked conditions of poverty, waywardness, disease, and physical degeneration; and for precise knowledge we can turn only to the studies of family histories of mental defectives which are beginning to be made by the foremost institutions for the insane and feeble-minded, and preeminently by the Station for Experimental Evolution at Cold Springs Harbor, N. Y., under Dr. Chas. B. Davenport. The first studies under Dr. Davenport are not yet published at this writing. The history of the Jukes, in New York

State, already referred to, and of the Ishmaelites in Indiana, were the first such studies given a wide hearing, and are still excellent reference for anyone who wants to know how it is possible for two or three degenerate individuals to cost the state in four or five generations over a million dollars, through the procreation of hundreds of lives predestined to crime, immorality, and pauperism.

The only evidence it was possible to collect served to show that even in the east, where for from fifty to eighty years the process of "fishing out" the rural communities has continued the general degeneration to be expected has not yet been realized, but seems where found to be traceable in great part to certain families in each region, noted for their poor specimens of humanity.

Dr. A. C. Rogers, of the Minnesota School for Feeble-Minded and Epileptics, in answer to a question concerning the amount of degeneracy in rural districts, writes, "I have never had any special reason to suppose there was any particular amount of degeneracy in one portion of the community more than another in this state." And as for rural life causing mental defectiveness, Dr. Davenport, of Cold Springs Harbor, writes, "Whether in any sparsely settled country there shall be more insanity or more 'feeble-mindedness' depends, I think, more upon the nature of the germ plasm that orginally settled that country than it does upon the nature

of the country itself." If this principle is true, it is filled with great hope for those who would root out the sore spots in the country, for it means that the direct method of segregating the tainted germ plasm, to prevent it from reproducing its kind, will not only relieve the immediate situation but will prevent its recurrence, except as new specimens immigrate.

If country life does not make for defects of mind, however, it certainly possesses dangers for character. "The effect of isolation upon weak characters," says Professor Carver, "is to destroy all respect for tradition, authority, or social convention." Professor E. A. Ross, of the University of Wisconsin, finds this exemplified in the "low standards of life and conduct," "precocious sexuality," and "unfaithfulness to marriage vows."

Mrs. Edith Ellicott Smith, President of the Pennsylvania Rural Progress Association, says that "great cities are now beyond question, a safer place of residence than the little hamlet. These places are invariably the headquarters of the 'off color' population of large neighborhoods without police, and set the type for a general free and easy style of manners and habits, out of which comes a ghastly wreck of character. Certainly, even on farms, the proportion of children born two or three months after marriage is very large, and it may be that the dull social life has a bearing upon this fact."

J. J. Kelso, Superintendent of the Department

of Neglected and Dependent Children in Ontario, a province including cities and small towns, says, "Without doubt the worst cases of immorality, incest, cruelty, and neglect of children, in my experience, have been in the country."

But why multiply "general opinions"? The first and most important finding of this attempt to collect the results of studies of poverty and degeneracy in small towns and rural districts is the utter lack of such studies, and the imperative need of having such made if anything more than "general opinions, and superficial and fragmentary knowledge" is to be made available.

In the meantime, there are ways in which the individual problems in rural communities may be met, whether they be of insanity, feeble-mindedness, cruelty, neglect, or poverty.

INSANITY

Fortunately, state institutional care for the insane is now universal in this country. The problem is not, how shall this insane person be cared for? but, how shall this nervous person who is rapidly losing control of himself, be prevented from becoming insane? Eleven states now provide for voluntary admission to hospitals for the insane. Thus a person competent to make application, who feels as though he were "going to go insane," can apply for admission, obtain the care best suited to prevent the disease from going further, and leave the hospital

at will upon three to five days' notice. Just the bare knowledge that there are such places to go to, without waiting for that awful final plunge into darkness, will save many a person; and the actual treatment in an institution—*which the patient can leave at any time*—will save still more. Every person who reads this should ask their state hospital for the insane if voluntary admittance is provided for in his state. If it is, this good news should be made known in every hamlet. If it is not, no stone should be left unturned to see that a law providing for it is passed. If you do not know how to go about this, write to The National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 50 Union Square, New York City.

In Connecticut, New York, Ohio, Illinois, and California, work for the prevention of insanity has been organized. The program, to quote from one such organization, includes.

"1. General education of the public as to the cause and prevention of insanity;

2. Promotion of the establishment of clinics for mental and nervous diseases;

3. Securing proper medical treatment for cases of incipient insanity."

If you want the people of your community to know the avoidable causes of insanity (which account for about 50 per cent of the patients under treatment) write to The National Committee for Mental Hygiene to ask what society in your state can send you literature and speakers. From the same source you can obtain informa-

tion as to whether there is an organization in your state which will help you secure proper medical treatment for an individual, incipient case. If this Society replies that there is no agency to do either of these things in your state, appeal to them to promote one that will, and do all you can to back them up.

THE FEEBLE-MINDED

Feeble-mindedness is said to produce more pauperism, degeneracy, and crime than any other one force. It is estimated that one person out of every 300 in this country is feeble-minded. In the prisons and almshouses, one out of every five is feeble-minded. No genuine case ever was, or ever can be cured. If left in the community a feeble-minded boy or girl can grow up only to a life of unhappiness, dependence, and probably crime. The feeble-minded, because of their utter lack of moral sense and consequent inability to protect themselves, inevitably reproduce, almost surely reproduce their kind, and are found to give birth to twice as many children as normal parents. Every single one of these wretched beings that is not under responsible private care should be removed to an institution,—for their own protection, training, and happiness, to save the state the cost of their pauperism and crime, and to protect the innocents unborn. Five states have passed laws providing for the sterilization of this and other

classes of degenerates. What the results will be cannot be foretold. Certainly it will save us from the hideous crime of knowingly permitting them to bring other degenerates into the world, but whether it will not make immorality and disease more prevalent is not so sure. In any event, it is but a supplementary device, seemingly invented to tide over the time until the public will consent to the permanent segregation of all degenerates, whether paupers, feeble-minded, or criminals, and will provide the funds necessary to do this.

Only twenty-five states have provision for the care of the feeble-minded, and not one single one has adequate provision. Three states claim to have eliminated them from their almshouses, but none of the other states have. Dr. Goddard of Vineland, N. J. describes "one of the best almshouses to be found," where out of one hundred and five children born, during a period of five years, one hundred and two were feeble-minded. Backward children who are a hindrance to the other children in school, the butt of ridicule and a source of moral danger at play, and "a nuisance" at home, when placed in a proper institution are trained to such manual dexterity as does not require maturity of mind, contribute materially to their support—until in manhood and womanhood 10 to 30 per cent of them attain, under direction, full self support—and live safe, useful, contented lives. The fundamental principle to bear in mind, however,

is that this safety, usefulness, and contentment is assured only in a "village for the simple." There must always be the protection from and for society, there must always be skilled direction of the employment, and there must always be the simple, guarded conditions of life to insure happiness.

Our experts at the head of institutions hesitate to declare for universal and life long institutional care for the feeble-minded, but they know in their minds and hearts, and some of them will say, that this is the only humane, unselfish, and scientific policy.

And what can the individual in a country town do about all this? He can see that every child in his community, found in school or out, whose development seems to lag behind his years, is examined by a physician for physical and mental defects. Failing the right physician, a letter to the state institution for feeble-minded, or to the Training School for Backward and Feeble-minded at Vineland, N. J. will bring him tests to apply. For the child, then, believed to be feeble-minded, or for the dull, immoral adult, in the almshouse or afloat, an application for admittance to the state institution should be made. When told that there is no room, as he will be in every state having such an institution, the next step is to appeal to the legislators from his district, and to get other voters to, and to keep at it until every feeble-minded individual in the community is provided for; and then pass the

word along to other communities until the whole state has done what no state yet has done, and what *not to do* is from a business viewpoint folly, and from a Christian standpoint sin.

POVERTY

Less seems to be known about poverty in the country than about any of the subjects considered in this chapter. Only one study in one county was reported in answer to the country-wide correspondence already alluded to. One method of approaching this difficult field of inquiry would be through records of out-door poor relief in small towns as compared with larger towns or "cities." Such an examination of the towns of New Hampshire, for instance, shows that in 1910, in the five towns of over 10,000 population (the largest 57,000), 11 out of every 1,000 inhabitants was given public out-door relief; in the five towns between 5,000 and 10,000 population, 18 out of every 1,000, and in the 2,224 towns under 5,000 population, 24 out of every 1,000. The amount of aid per person assisted was $29.00 in the towns over 10,000 and $23.00 in the towns under 10,000; while the amount per capita of population was 32 cents in the large towns and 55 cents in the small. This shows an unexpected amount of poverty in the rural townships as compared with the urban, especially when it is considered that most of the family emergencies in the country are still met in the good old neighborly fashion.

Perhaps in the face of such ignorance of the extent of poverty in the country, it would not be expected that much progress could be recorded with respect to ways of meeting the problems arising therefrom. In large towns and cities, to provide for want and to help families who have become unable to provide for themselves—whether from sickness, death, had habits, lack of training, or incapacity—get back to independence, it has been found that experience and training in dealing with such problems is essential for the best results; that the moral, physical, and mental problems involved require at least as much skill to solve, and are every bit as dangerous to treat, as the ills for which physicians are necessary. How the small community can command such service is a problem which has hardly yet begun to be answered. To obtain light upon it, the thirty-seven states above referred to were each asked: "Do you know of any small towns or rural sections which have worked out a satisfactory method of applying to family problems in the country the expert treatment thought necessary in the city?" And: "Are there any state or county organizations, public or private, which afford such expert treatment for rural families, or children, and how do they operate?" The answer to the first question revealed an almost absolute lack of such local community developments. There are promising beginnings, here and there, however. One county in Pennsylvania has an Associated Chari-

ties for the county, with a paid worker, and headquarters in a town of 2,600. This work has been under way but a few months. Other experiments of the kind are needed, where two or three towns or more unite in the employment of an expert. No small town, unless with endowment funds, can afford to pay for the full time of a trained worker. Another line of experiment is that in Amherst, Mass., where, a year and a half ago, a Social Service League was formed to deal with all sorts of family problems, and a trained social worker engaged to give half her time to Amherst and half to nearby towns, under the direction of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. An office in Amherst is kept open every day, where calls for any kind of human service are received, where the district nurse has her headquarters, and the needs and resources of the town come together. Societies for the prevention of cruelty to children do not ordinarily interpret their function broadly enough to allow of such cooperation; and because of the common identification of these societies, with the arm of the law, it is possible that a more natural and easy participation in the local family problems not involving cruelty, is possible under such a society as the New York State Charities Aid Association. This association, in cooperation with the county governments, maintains local agencies for dependent children in thirteen counties of the state. While the work is con-

cerned chiefly with children, in many cases the agents assist public officials in connection with poor relief cases not involving children, and in one case, at least, the association, on request, has agreed to handle all the family problems which one rural township may care to refer to them.

In five other states there are reported children's aid societies which go to the aid of any children in need of succor, and no doubt they could be made to serve the other family problems in the rural districts of those states. The Maryland Children's Aid Society was organized for the purpose "of meeting each family situation in the counties, when it arises, to prevent despondency, disease and crime, to give or secure the proper treatment of each child in trouble, and promote a local interest in matters pertaining to the welfare of children." It is proposed to develop such agencies in each of the judicial districts of the state, and to place in each a trained child specialist.

The State Charities Aid and Prison Reform Association of New Jersey aims to establish branches in every county of the state, with committees on County Institutions, Cooperation with Churches and Private Charities, Tuberculosis, Finance, Education and Publicity, Overseers of the Poor, Children, Vagrants, and Housing; with a central office and a paid secretary in each county.

In Oklahoma, the State Conference of Chari-

ties and Correction has organized twenty county conferences with a membership of something like 3,000, which it is intended to develop into strong local agencies, a method of organization which may well be copied elsewhere.

District nurses are beginning to be used in small towns, and where they have had special experience or training in dealing with *family* problems, not otherwise, they may be relied upon for social as well as physical treatment. This is a form of service that may be made to contribute considerably toward its own support, a much larger proportion of the people in a small town being able to pay than in the city districts where visiting nursing is best known. The best plan for making available for family emergencies all the resources of a community and all kinds of service—social worker, nurse, attendant, household helper, neighbor—has been developed in Brattleboro, Vermont, a town of 7,000, and copied in towns larger and smaller and in at least one rural district. A letter to the Brattleboro Mutual Aid Association will bring their last report.

One other means now employed to bring expert advice to the family problems of rural districts is through probation officers. One such officer in Pennsylvania writes, "I have recently been sent into the outlying inaccessible corners of our county, and am appalled by what I find. . . . I have had a vision of missionary probation officers going among these homes with

the authority of the court back of them, correcting wrong conditions, and being able, after a study of conditions, to make recommendations for proper and much needed legislation." County probation officers who serve not only in the county court, but also in the Supreme Court, and in the courts of all third class cities, towns and villages in the county, have been provided for in New Jersey ever since 1900. In 1911 there were sixteen such county officers in New York State. The influence of an officer of the law going about the county at unstated intervals is salutary in itself, and such a one is called upon for much advice and unofficial corrective influence. As there are only seven states without probation laws, this is one of the most universally applicable agencies for bringing expert aid to the problems of rural communities.

This discussion of some of the problems which face all rural communities, whether or not they are conscious of them, and of the means which are beginning to be developed to meet them, may prove helpful for those living in states where such agencies exist; but of what use is it to those who live where they are not available? In the first place, do not be too sure that they are not available. Make it your business to acquaint yourself now, without waiting for a crucial problem to arise, with all the resources of the county, state, and nation. To assist you in this, the following sources of information are suggested:

1. For information concerning institutions, or treatment for insanity, The National Committee for Mental Hygiene, 50 Union Square, New York City.

2. For information concerning institutions or treatment for the feeble-minded, American Association for the Study of the Feeble-Minded, Dr. A. C. Rogers, Secretary, Faribault, Minn.

3. For information concerning institutions or agencies for the care of destitute or neglected children, Department of Child Helping, Russell Sage Foundation, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City.

4. For information concerning agencies that will assist in family rehabilitation, or concerning the organization and financing of such an agency, National Association of Societies for Organizing Charity, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City.

5. For information concerning institutions or agencies for the care or assistance of the blind, American Association for the Conservation of Vision, 25 West 39th Street, New York City.

6. For information concerning institutions or agencies for the treatment or prevention of tuberculosis, National Association for the Study and Prevention of Tuberculosis, 105 East 22nd Street, New York City.

7. For information concerning prisons, reformatories and reformatory agencies, National Prisoners Aid Society, 135 East 15th Street, New York City.

X

WHAT COUNTRY MINISTERS HAVE DONE

Warren H. Wilson

According to President Kenyon L. Butterfield, "The country church is the church that serves the working farmer." From this we may define the country minister as the minister who helps country people to be good farmers. In these days only one person in three of the population is working at farming, and a good farmer is the man who produces much out of the land for others to use, consumes little himself, and makes a living on the farm satisfactory to his own family and to the community.

In all the good farming we have the minister of religion is an essential factor. The American populations who farm well, producing an abundance of food and raw materials for others to use, and securing a satisfactory living for themselves and their families, building communities, holding the young people on the farm for successive generations, are all religiously organized. As a rule their churches are their only unions for better farming. Their ministers and church officers are their leaders; their farming is reinforced with moral and religious sentiments, which organize their thought in rural

terms. Their codes of conduct are "plain." Their aspirations are homely. Their standards are austere. Their training makes them thrifty. The examples held before them are those of industry, patience, faith and quietness. The exponents of these agricultural virtues without which no farming can be either productive or profitable are ministers of religion.

They are teachers of the spiritual imperatives without which farming lapses into peasantry, or riots out into speculation, absentee ownership and landlordism. The men who have held back the Pennsylvania Germans and the Scotch Presbyterians from joining the rural exodus are their ministers.

With one exception these populations of good farmers "brought from Europe their modes of tilling the soil." The Mormon is the one American product who through whole counties and states has adapted the farming industry to production and to the support of strong communities. This sole American farmer is so religious that, because of his heresies and his abhorrent practices, we fear his power; but we must not overlook that his leaders have been bishops, apostles and pastors and that the Mormon is a farmer.

Where in individual communities American ministers have found a way aside from European traditions to help their people become better farmers, they have generally found it along the roads of Agricultural Science, Farm Cooper-

ation, Supervised Recreation, Religious Education, Religious Federation and Community Organization.

In this brief chapter I can give only single illustrations of each of these modes of efficiency. Instead of naming the minister or his denomination, I will mention the state in which he lives. Of all rural leaders, I believe the ministers have a greater number in the lead, among those who are showing the way to better farming. They live longer in the country than the teacher in the one room school; they are more in sympathy with farmers than are the merchants, agents or middle men; and they are more in favor with the farmer than the professional "farm organizer."

It is worth noting in passing that the worst failure in farming in America has probably been in New England, where religion in the middle of the 19th Century under the "New England School" of Philosophy became most idealistic, its arguments most deductive; its doctrine most polemical, and its range of interest most unpractical. The only areas of country life known to me, in which people do not go to church at all, are in New England and among colonies of New England people. Among the people taught by Emerson and the theorists of the Unitarian controversy, the rural exodus has been most exhausting, exploitation most complete, farms abandoned, rural communities degenerate. I think the preachers of New England who

taught individualism instead of social efficiency had a hand in this.

The best example of a minister who taught the farmer how to farm was until recently in Maryland. He is a conservative in theology in an old-fashioned community, which was compelled to transform its traditional peach crop into a new husbandry. He used his pulpit as his assembly, the ancient academy in which he was required to teach as his class room, and the forty-acre glebe beside the manse as his laboratory. He studied books on soils, seeds and farm management. He transformed himself from a Hebrew scholar to a specialist in potatoes. He shifted the place of his prayers from the Holy Land of Syria to the Holy Earth of Maryland. He talked like a farmer in the pulpit about the sufferings and joys of his own people. He introduced scientific agriculture in the academy, for the next generation. He demonstrated on his forty acres, which he planted in potatoes, and protected through a dry summer with a dust mulch, that the soil of that region was suited for the raising of potatoes. This man became the saviour of his people. He gave them courage, leadership, intelligent service, spiritual uplift in daily toil, and industrial efficiency through culture of mind and heart.

In Kentucky there has been in the past decade a bitter fight for self respect and economic freedom among small farmers. They raise tobacco, for which their soil is suited; but for

years the price was fixed by others. Debt was universal; money was scarcely ever seen by working farmers; labor was little better than slavery; women and children worked in the fields. In the agitation for better prices through combination, the preachers played a great part. They saw the evils and felt in their churches the bitter poverty of their people. They did not flinch from the struggle nor fear its sometimes bloody incidents. The end of it has been prosperity, based on economic freedom. The farmer now fixes the price within reason for his product. The building of new and better churches is only one element of extensive social improvement among these devout, religious and independent people, who have prospered through industrial organization.

In Mississippi one of the leaders of better farming is an eloquent, brilliant minister, who rather than starve among the discouraged leaderless flock of country people, has become at once organizer, orator and editor; devoting his life with religious fervor to the organization of farmers to secure a better income. It is characteristic of him and of other such leaders that he talks the language of the pulpit and appeals constantly to the motives of Christian conduct.

In Iowa the most eminent country life leader is a preacher who learned in years of church and farm life the lessons which he teaches in a great weekly journal. His column on the Sunday-school lesson is the most widely read and

the most thoroughly appreciated part of his paper.

There is in Missouri a minister who away back in the country is farming three acres himself and directing the labor of his people upon ten acres more of experiment farm. This is an illustration of the principles stated above. But this active leader of his people has a method better still. He has a Children's Church at one of his preaching stations. Every office and detail of a church of his denomination is imitated in a minature congregation of children. Sometimes the preacher is present, and sometimes not, at these services, but the young people are studying and practicing religion.

Country congregations must have those policies for which they have leaders; at least, they can have no others. Religious education is difficult because so few rural folk are competent to teach. There was a church on the borders of New England a few years ago that had Sunday-school leaders trained in the best methods. For ten years its school was the dynamo of all the good work in the community. The minister was for years the teacher of teachers. A Teachers' Training Class met at a private house one night each week for hard and thorough study of the lesson. This was followed by a frank confidential talk about each scholar, every event and about any need of the community, which came that week into attention. The last half hour of the evening was

spent in prayer, in which all took part. That Teachers' Meeting and the School through which it poured its energy on the community were a great help and stimulus to the farmers for miles around, most of whom were not even aware of its sessions, and very few of whom were admitted.

Religious Federation is a more important principle in country life than church union. It is a spiritual and not a legal transaction. It does not have to be passed on by the courts, and never engages the attention of the sheriff. The church mentioned above received into its membership adherents of eleven different denominations. It was sanctioned at its organization by the five churches on whose parishes it bordered. But it was subject to none of them. This experience like all federations of Christian folk grew out of the needs of the community. It served as a uniting principle in a place where people of many different creeds had come to live. It was the only way by which all could be by religion united, rather than divided.

There is a church in Illinois, the members of which have reconstructed the common schools. It is the only church of the community. Its members for twenty-five years worked at the task of improving the schools. This church, which has an educational policy thoroughly American, has customs of recreation also in which all the people join. The holidays of the year are celebrated together. The 4th of July

is a great gathering to which men come from the towns. The church and its people are the organizers of the community.

Similar influence is possessed by two great churches in New Jersey. One of them has a yearly "Anniversary." Nobody knows what it commemorates and nobody cares, for in an average year it assembles some three to five thousand people and they have so good a time that each event is the anniversary of the last. These people come by every conveyance imaginable, from a farm wagon to a Pullman coach and six cylinder motor. They are the children of the countryside come home again. It is a great reunion which the church possesses as a custom of its own. By this means it organizes the community.

The other church has for two hundred years rendered religious service, and united in one body the people who live in a territory six miles by five. Instead of several denominations with their competing houses of worship, this church has built three chapels in various parts of the parish, in all of which each week the minister appears, while all the people each week at one service appear in the central house of worship. There is no danger at present of this church dying out, though it is very near New York City.

The standards of efficiency are changing in the country. The American church and minister must create out of brain and heart, with the

Divine leadership, a new way of serving the people in the interest of the Kingdom of God. Certain definite principles are already clear. You may find them in the social methods of the Europeanized American farmer; you will find them among the Mormon country churches, and in those churches which out in the open fields are demonstrating that the American people are just as religious as ever. These principles may be condensed in the words: The social service of the church and its people to the community.

THE END

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